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THE NEW YORKER

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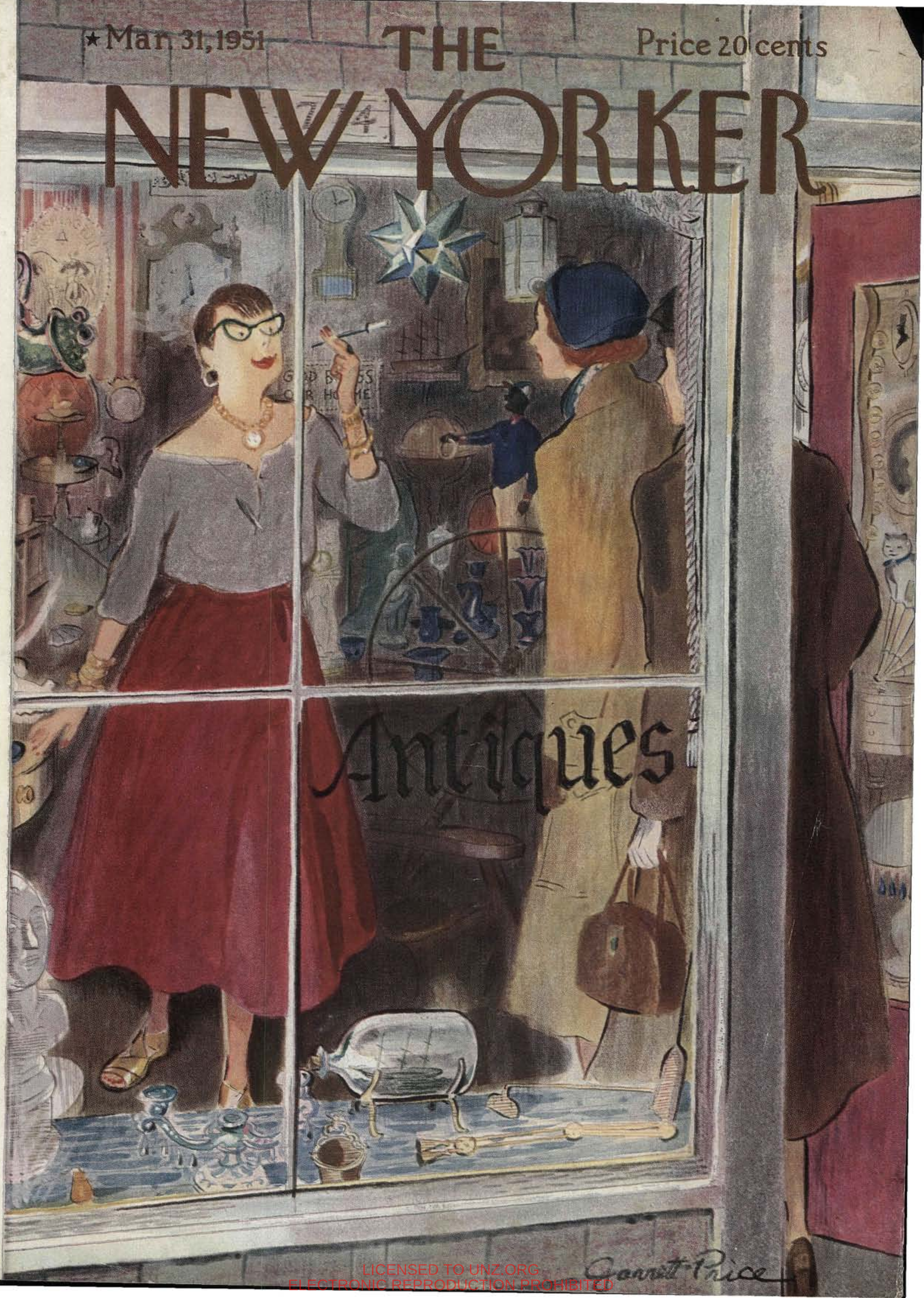
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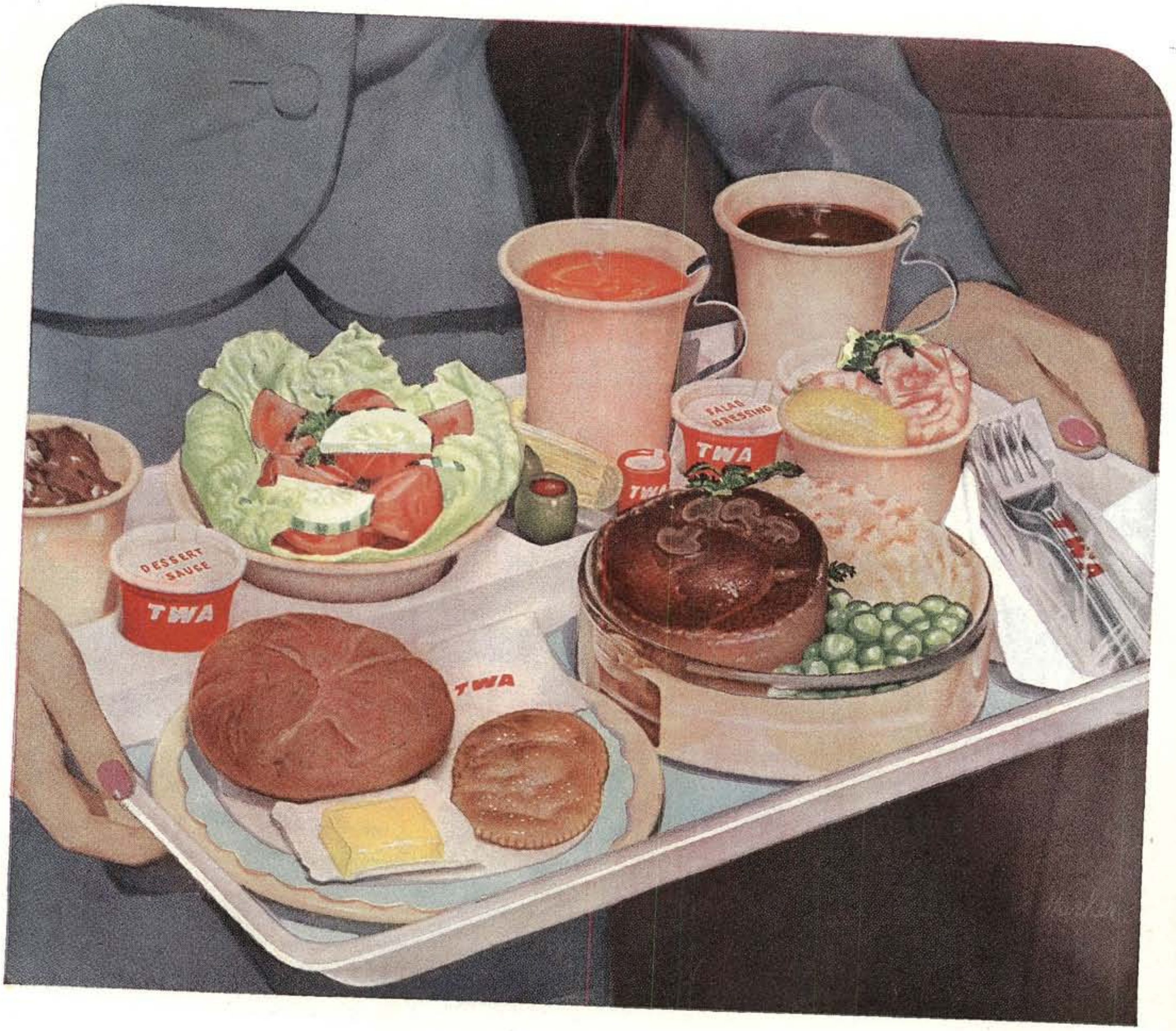
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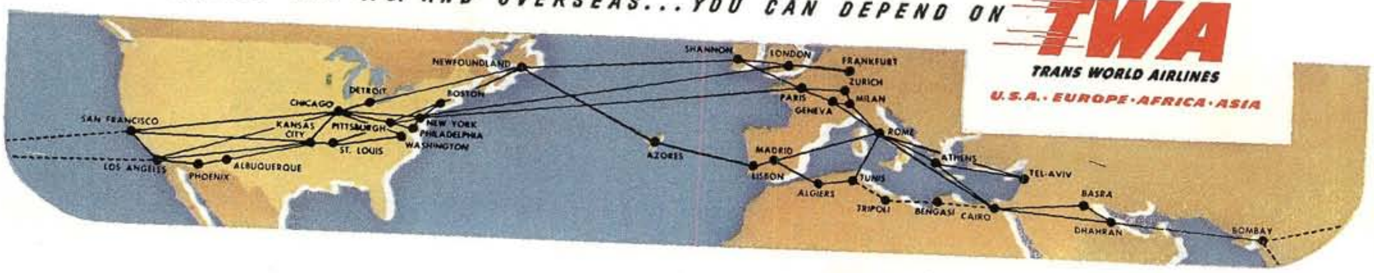
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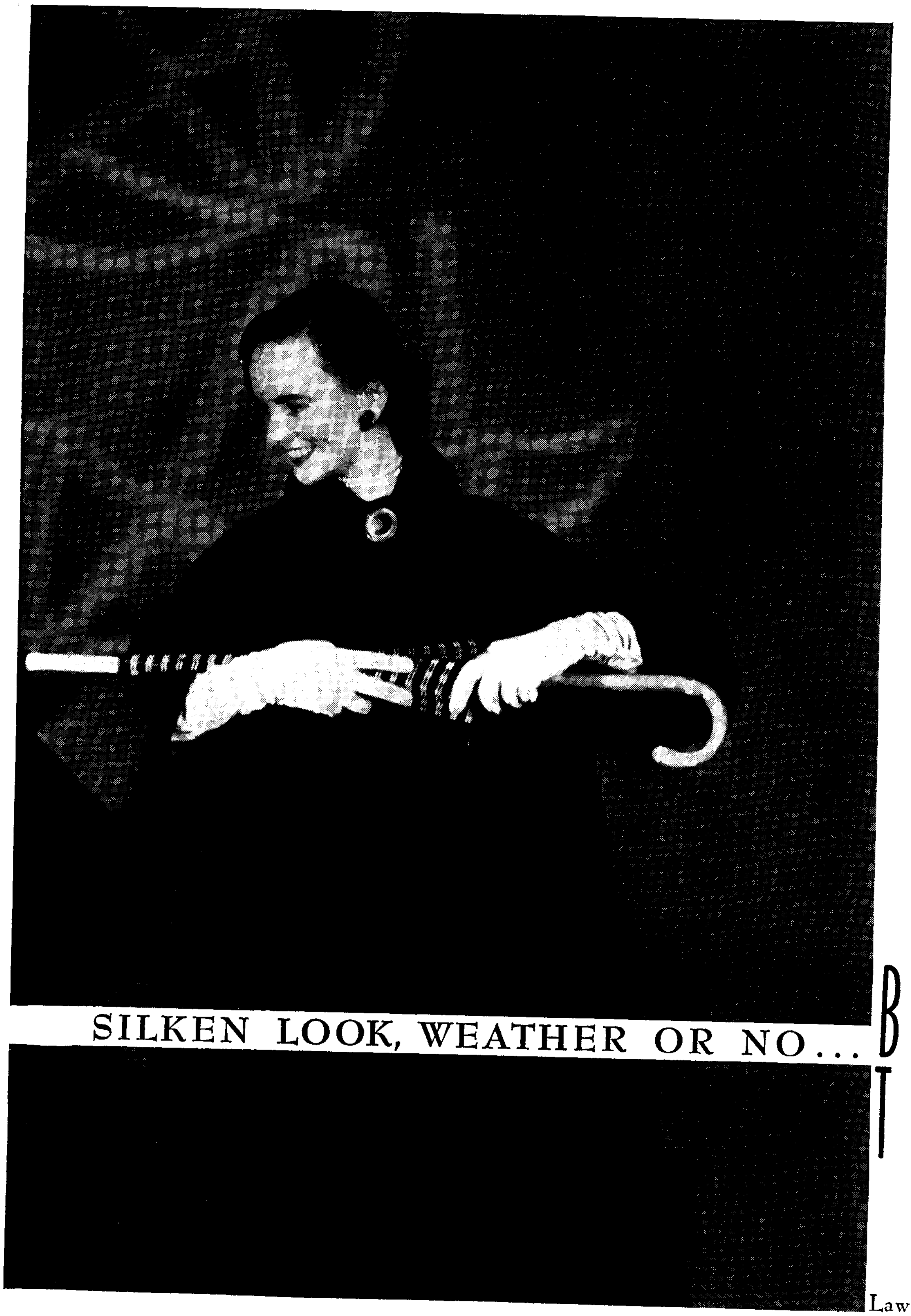SILKEN LOOK, WEATHER OR NO...

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GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

THE THEATRE

(E. and W. mean East and West of Broadway.)

PLAYS

Affairs of State—Celeste Holm in a comedy dealing with Washington love and politics, neat and unsurprising, that is Louis Verneuil's first job of playwriting in English. With Reginald Owen, Barbara O'Neil, and Shepperd Strudwick. (Music Box, 45th St., W. CI 6-4636. Nightly, except Sundays, at 8:30. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2:30.)

Angel in the Pawnshop—Eddie Dowling and Joan McCracken do their best, but this moral fantasy by A. B. Shiffrin is one of the season's most wearing efforts. Willie Lewis and his clarinet are perhaps the brightest spot of the evening. (Booth, 45th St., W. CI 6-5969. Nightly at 8:40. Matinée Saturday at 2:40. Closes Saturday, March 31.)

The Autumn Garden—Lillian Hellman on the emotional aches and pains of middle age. A drama that isn't as tightly knit as some of Miss Hellman's previous works, but one with enough strength to compensate for its diffuseness. Fredric March, Florence Eldridge, Jane Wyatt, Kent Smith, and Ethel Griffies are included in the superb cast. (Coronet, 49th St., W. CI 6-8870. Nightly, except Sundays, at 8:30. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2:30.)

Bell, Book and Candle—Although John van Druten's comedy about witchcraft in modern Manhattan lags a bit toward the end, it is a remarkably entertaining play. Lilli Palmer makes a captivating sorceress, Rex Harrison is excellent as her bewitched admirer, and the rest of the cast, including a Siamese cat, is very capable, too. (Ethel Barrymore, 47th St., W. CI 6-0390. Nightly, except Sundays, at 8:30. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2:30.)

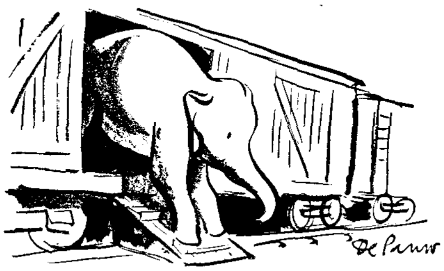
Billy Budd—This adaptation of Herman Melville's novel is half nautical melodrama and half philosophical discourse, and it is not quite satisfactory on either level. Dennis King plays the captain who reluctantly causes the hero to be hanged, Torin Thatcher is the villainous master-at-arms, and Charles Nolte has the title role. (Biltmore, 47th St., W. CI 6-9353. Nightly, except Sundays, at 8:40. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2:40.)

The Country Girl—A play by Clifford Odets about an alcoholic actor and his understanding wife. It is likely to remind you of several things you've seen before, but it has its touching moments, and Uta Hagen and Paul Kelly are most persuasive as the troubled pair. (Lyceum, 45th St., E. LU 2-3897. Nightly, except Sundays, at 8:40. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2:40.)

Darkness at Noon—Sidney Kingsley's adaptation of Arthur Koestler's novel about the life and death of a revolutionary may easily be the most distinguished play of the season. Claude Rains does a splendid job as the tragic hero, and there are sparkling supporting performances by Walter J. Palance, Kim Hunter, and Alexander Scourby. (Royale, 45th St., W. CI 5-5760. Nightly, except Sundays, at 8:40. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2:40.)

L'Ecole des Femmes—Louis Jouvet and his Théâtre de l'Athénée company, of Paris, triumph over the age of this Molière comedy with a splendid production, and over language differences with splendid acting. The seventh of a series of subscription productions offered by A.N.T.A. (ANTA Playhouse, 52nd St., W. Nightly at 8:40. Matinées Thursday, Saturday, and Tuesday, at 2:45. Closes Tuesday, April 3. For information about tickets, call JU 2-2660.)

The Green Pastures—A fine, vivid revival, with a brand-new cast, of the Marc Connelly play about Heaven and earth that is based on the Negro-Sunday-school stories of Roark Bradford. (Broadway Theatre, Broadway at 53rd St. CI 7-2887. Nightly, except Sundays, at 8:40. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2:40.)



A CONSCIENTIOUS CALENDAR OF EVENTS OF INTEREST

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
				29	30	31
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

The Moon Is Blue—A glossy comedy by F. Hugh Herbert, in which Barry Nelson, Donald Cook, and Barbara Bel Geddes figure as an upstanding architect, an affable roué, and a talkative virgin, respectively. All are likable, and Mr. Herbert's lines are often bright. (Henry Miller, 43rd St., E. BR 9-3970. Nightly, except Sundays, at 8:30. Matinées Thursdays and Saturdays at 2:30.)

Romeo and Juliet—Olivia de Havilland tries hard, but she just doesn't sound convincing as the mooning maid of old Verona. As Mercutio, Jack Hawkins stands out in this revival. (Broadhurst, 44th St., W. CI 6-6699. Nightly, except Sundays, at 8:30. Matinées Thursdays and Saturdays at 2:30.)

The Rose Tattoo—Like his previous plays, Tennessee Williams' latest is laid in the South, but his heroine this time is neither doomed nor demented, and the result on the whole is very appealing. Maureen Stapleton and Eli Wallach are amazingly good in the leading roles, and Boris Aronson has designed a highly apposite set. (Martin Beck, 45th St., W. CI 6-6363. Nightly, except Sundays, at 8:40. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2:40.)

Season in the Sun—Wolcott Gibbs has revamped his series of Fire Island stories into one of the funniest plays to come along in some time. With Richard Whorf, Nancy Kelly, Paula Laurence, Anthony Ross, and King Calder. (Cort, 48th St., E. CI 5-4289. Nightly, except Sundays, at 8:40. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2:40.)

Second Threshold—Clive Brook is admirable as a man who sees no further reason for living, but otherwise this posthumous play by Philip Barry, which Robert E. Sherwood has more or less revised, is slightly disappointing. (Morosco, 45th St., W. CI 6-6230. Nightly, except Sundays, at 8:40. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2:40.)

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CHANGE OF ADDRESS

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Springtime for Henry—A cute, but not attractively so, presentation of a hit of twenty years ago. Starring Edward Everett Horton. (Golden, 45th St., W. CI 6-6740. Moves on Monday, April 2, to the Booth, 45th St., W. CI 6-5969. Nightly, except Sundays, at 8:40. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2:40.)

Twentieth Century—This 1932 Hecht-MacArthur comedy about some very strange and comic carryings on aboard the Limited has been brilliantly revived, with a company headed by José Ferrer and Gloria Swanson. (Fulton, 46th St., W. CI 6-6380. Nightly, except Sundays, at 8:45. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2:45.)

Long Run—**the happy time:** A high-spirited French-Canadian family and the effect of its uninhibited behavior on an adolescent boy. Roger Dann now has the lead. (Plymouth, 45th St., W. CI 6-9156. Nightly, except Sundays, at 8:35. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2:35.)

MUSICALS

Call Me Madam—Ethel Merman plays a lady ambassador just about the way she played Annie Oakley, which is, of course, practically perfectly. The occasionally uneven book is the work of Howard Lindsay and Russel Crouse; Irving Berlin wrote the generally excellent songs; and the cast includes Paul Lukas, Alan Hewitt, Russell Nype, and Pat Harrington. (Imperial, 45th St., W. CO 5-2412. Nightly, except Sundays, at 8:30. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2:30.)

Guys and Dolls—This triumphant comedy, adapted from one of Damon Runyon's stories, at last gives us a worthy rival to "South Pacific." The book is the work of Abe Burrows and Jo Swerling, Frank Loesser wrote the music and lyrics, and the dashing cast is headed by Isabel Bigley, Sam Levene, Robert Alda, and Vivian Blaine. (46th Street Theatre, 46th St., W. CI 6-4271. Nightly, except Sundays, at 8:30. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2:30.)

Out of This World—Cole Porter did the music and lyrics for this variation of the Amphitryon legend, but somehow it isn't as funny or as tuneful as it ought to be. Other participants include Lemuel Ayers, who designed the sets and costumes; Hanya Holm, who arranged the dances; and Charlotte Greenwood and David Burns, who provide most of whatever comedy there is. (Century, Seventh Ave. at 59th St. CI 7-3121. Nightly, except Sundays, at 8:30. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2:30.)

Long Runs—**gentlemen prefer blondes:** Lorelei Lee and her trip abroad. Carol Channing, Yvonne Adair, and Jack McCauley populate the Anita Loos story. (Ziegfeld, Sixth Ave. at 54th St. CI 5-5200. Nightly, except Sundays, at 8:30. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2:30.) . . . **kiss me, kate:** "The Taming of the Shrew" as Shakespeare might have written it if he had had a hand from Cole Porter. Currently with Anne Jeffreys and Ted Scott. (Shubert, 44th St., W. CI 6-5990. Nightly, except Sundays, at 8:30. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2:30.) . . . **south pacific:** Anybody here doesn't know about "South Pacific"? Ray Middleton is now playing opposite Mary Martin. (Majestic, 44th St., W. CI 6-0730. Nightly, except Sundays, at 8:25. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2:25.)

OPENINGS

(There are often last-minute changes in dates and curtain times, so it is a good idea to verify them before starting out.)

The King and I—Gertrude Lawrence in a musical produced by Rodgers & Hammerstein

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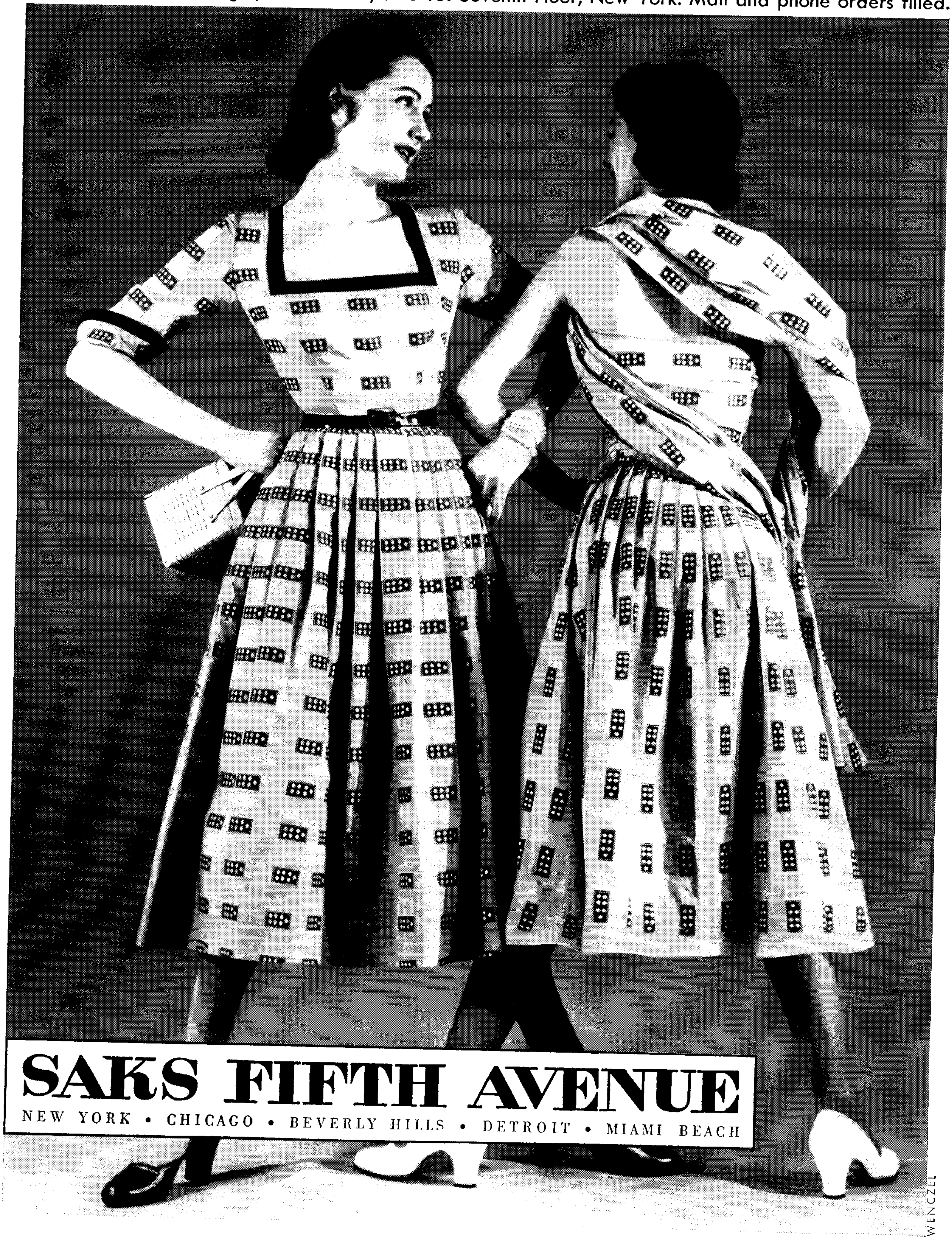

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WENCZEL

GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

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and based on Margaret Landon's novel "Anna and the King of Siam." Richard Rodgers wrote the score, and Oscar Hammerstein II did the book and lyrics. Directed by John van Druten. Opens Thursday, March 29. (St. James, 44th St., W. LA 4-4664. Nightly, except Sundays, at 8:25; opening-night curtain at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2:25.)

MISCELLANY

Blue Hill Troupe—Presenting Gilbert and Sullivan's "The Pirates of Penzance" and "Trial by Jury." For the benefit of the Manhattan Eye, Ear, and Throat Hospital. (Hunter Playhouse, Park Ave. at 68th St. Thursday and Friday, March 29-30, at 8:45. Special performance for children, Saturday, March 31, at 2:30. For tickets, call BU 8-8302.)

The Circus—Ringling Brothers and Barnum & Bailey ushering in spring on Eighth Avenue. (Madison Square Garden. CO 5-6811. First performance Wednesday, April 4, at 8:30, for the benefit of the New York Heart Association; for tickets call MU 8-1400. Thereafter, daily at 2:15 and 8:30, through Sunday, May 6. The doors open at 1 and 7 for those who like to roam around among the sideshows in the basement.)

Cornelia Otis Skinner—Monologuist. (Brooklyn Academy of Music, 30 Lafayette Ave. ST 3-6700. Tuesday, April 3, at 8:30.)

NIGHT LIFE

(Some places at which you will find music or other entertainment. They are open every evening, except as indicated.)

DINNER, SUPPER, AND DANCING

Ambassador, Park Ave. at 51st St. (PL 5-1000)—Except on Sundays, dancing in the Trianon Room to the soothing ministrations of Jules Lande's and Nino de Moraes' orchestras at dinner and supper.

Biltmore, Madison Ave. at 43rd St. (MU 7-7000)—Mischa Raginsky's orchestra appears at dinnertime in the Madison Room and at cocktail time "under the clock." No dancing. Sunday is a day of rest.

Gogi's Larue, 45 E. 58th St. (EL 5-6374)—One of the hanging gardens of Babylon, now in the hands of Gogi, an expert at life-after-dark, and Ted Straeter, an expert at luxurious dance music. Gogi's peripatetic band of dreamy violinists is on tap, too. Monday nights are recess; Friday nights are black tie, s.v.p.

El Morocco, 154 E. 54th St. (EL 5-8769)—A midtown terminal for the New York-Acapulco shuttle run. Dancing to Chauncey Gray's orchestra and Chiquito's Latin band.

New Yorker, Eighth Ave. at 34th St. (LO 3-1000)—In the Terrace Room, at dinner and supper, there's another new ice show, in which Joan Hyldoft is the girl with the most arresting figure and figure eights. Dance music by Bernie Cummins' band. Closed Sundays.

Pierre, Fifth Ave. at 61st St. (TE 8-8000)—Larry Storch, a very active funnyman, and Mario and Floria, who dance, at dinner and supper, except Sundays, when there is just a dinner show. The scene is the Cotillion Room. On Tuesday, April 3, Rosalind Courtright takes over to unleash a bunch of songs. Stanley Melba's orchestra and a rumba band play for dancing. Closed Mondays. . . . ¶ Every night, Stanley Worth's dance orchestra from cocktails through supper in the Café Pierre. Except Sundays, Joan Bishop plays piano and sings.

Plaza, Fifth Ave. at 58th St. (PL 9-3000)—In the Persian Room, during dinner and supper, Dorothy Shay tells you about her Uncle Fud and other thoroughly apocryphal relatives. Dick La Salle's and Mark Monte's bands turn out jolly dance music. Closed Sundays. . . . ¶ The Rendez-Vous Room, a worldly and sumptuous bower, is full of Maximillian Bergere's and Nicolas Matthey's dance music after eight-thirty. . . . ¶ The Palm Court has Leo LeFleur's music during the cocktail hour. No dancing.

Ritz-Carlton, Madison Ave. at 46th St. (MU 8-3000)—At dinner in the ancestral Oval Room, Emery Deutsch's soft-spoken music, except Sundays, when Harold Sandler's orchestra does the honors. . . . ¶ Mr. Sandler's music is also audible in the Palm Court, from four to seven, except Sundays. No dancing in either room.

Roosevelt, Madison Ave. at 45th St. (MU 6-9200)—In the Grill at dinner and supper, dancing to the music of the Three Suns and Bernie Mann's hippety-hop orchestra. Closed Sundays.

St. Regis, Fifth Ave. at 55th St. (PL 3-4500)—Russell Nype drops in at the Maisonette on his way home from "Call Me Madam"—or maybe a Hasty Pudding Club rehearsal—to display his horn-rimmed glasses and a few songs at suppertime. Evalyn Tyner boxes with her piano at dinner and later heads a dance trio. Milt Shaw's band is around most of the evening. Closed Sundays.

Savoy-Plaza, Fifth Ave. at 59th St. (EL 5-2600)—Every afternoon and evening, Irving Conn's orchestra supplies the clientele of the Café Lounge with music to dance to.

Sherry-Netherland, Fifth Ave. at 59th St. (EL 5-2800)—The Carnaval Room, a fairly opulent peacock alley, has dinner and supper dance music by Hugo Pedell's band and Jan Brunesco's gypsies. Closed Sundays. . . . ¶ Dilson Petrey rambles along at the piano in the café bar, from six to twelve, except Sundays.

Statler, Seventh Ave. at 33rd St. (PE 6-5000)—Dancing to Freddy Martin's band in the Café Rouge during dinner and supper. Closed Sundays.

Stork Club, 3 E. 53rd St. (PL 3-1940)—An old curiosity shop much fancied by out-of-town sightseers. Dance music by Payson Ré's orchestra and a rumba band.

Versailles, 151 E. 50th St. (PL 8-0310)—Lucienne Boyer has checked in to remind everyone that April in Paris is around the corner. Artini and Consuelo prance, and Emile Petti's orchestra and Panchito's rumba band play. Dancing after nine.

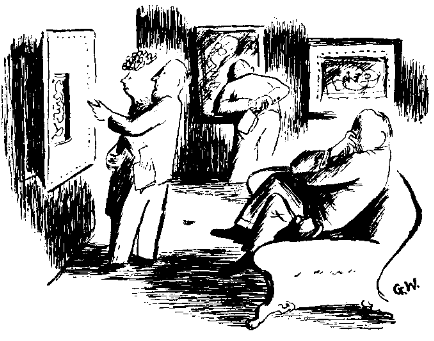
Waldorf-Astoria, Park Ave. at 49th St. (EL 5-3000)—It's newcomers' week in the Wedgwood Room, where, at dinner and supper, Terry-Thomas tries out his British jokes and Cabot and Dresden dance. Emil Coleman's orchestra, with which Mischa Borr's band alternates, is the mainstay of the dance-music department. On Sundays, no show, and Mr. Borr's band plays by itself until midnight. . . . ¶ Michael Zarin's orchestra functions for dancing in the Flamingo Room from six-thirty until two. Closed Sundays.

Note—The Rainbow Room, considerably more spacious than the Gobi Desert, is open for cocktails and listening music from four-thirty to nine every evening except Sunday. The best seats are in the bleachers, up near the windows. The address is 30 Rockefeller Plaza, the telephone is CI 6-5800.

SMALL AND CHEERFUL

(No dancing, unless noted.)

DRAKE ROOM, 71 E. 56th St. (PL 5-0600): Cy Walter, dean of Manhattan's piano professors, conducting his dinner and supper classes in modern offbeat piano. Sundays, Sam Hamilton is on the podium. . . . **LE COQ ROUGE,** 65 E. 56th St. (PL 3-8887): Eddie Davis, whose band has launched a thousand débutantes, holds forth here after eight. Phil D'Arcy's trio makes dance music, too. Closed Sundays. . . . **LITTLE CLUB,** 70 E. 55th St. (PL 3-9425): A jovial throwback to the social habits of the Noble Experiment. Except Sundays, Ira Brant's trio after ten. Except Mondays, Charlotte Sande at the piano during dinner and supper. . . . **ARMANDO'S,** 54 E. 55th St. (PL 3-0760): A clubby hideaway, where everyone knows everyone else and is delighted by the wonder of it all. Piano and violin after nine-thirty. Closed Sundays. . . . **VIEUX CARRÉ,** 13 E. 55th St. (PL 3-7296): Except Mondays, Louis Hawkins, a disarming host, presides over this bit of Deep South, just above L'Aiglon Restaurant, sprinkling his piano music and his conversation pieces lightly over his audience from dinnertime through supper. . . . **TONI'S CAPRICE,** 112 E. 52nd St. (PL 3-6255): An airy pleasure dome mainly dedicated to the inner man but also affording Wayne Sander's well-built little piano concertos at dinner and supper. Closed Sundays. . . . **EL CHICO,** 80 Grove St., at Sheridan Sq. (CH 2-4646): Good-natured Latin-American fun, accompanied by impassioned singing and almost as fervent dance music. Closed Mondays. . . . **LA VIE EN ROSE,** 123 E. 54th St. (MU 8-8420): Broadway wiping its feet on another East Side doormat, an extremely handsome one this time. The big moment is Marjane, a French songstress of considerable charm and unpunctuality, who these days is collaborating with the bubbly Cy Coleman Trio. Dinner and supper music, too. . . . **NINO,** 10 E. 52nd St. (PL 3-9014): The bar, a sterling example of the shooting-star school of interior decorating, has the perennial Rudy Timfield doing dinner and supper piano. Closed Sundays. . . . **JICKY CLUB,** 139 E. 56th St. (EL 5-1931): Though the place looks like a florist shop on Hollywood near Vine, Lee Wiley, perhaps the sweetest skylark of them all, is inside, singing after ten, except Mondays, the songs that made her and Gershwin famous. Except Tuesdays, Alex Fogarty presides persuasively over his piano after dinner. . . . **LA COMMEDIA,** 59 W. 52nd St. (PL 9-3477): Thelma Carpenter emits her teasing battle cries after the theatre, and Laurie Brewis, an institution here, scampers up and down the piano from dinnertime on. Closed Sundays. . . . **LA ZAMBRA,** 127 W. 52nd St. (CI 7-9131): Vicente Gomez treats his dinner and supper guests to an absorbing session of guitar strumming and a fair supply of byplay. Closed Tuesdays. . . . **CELESTE,** 28 W. 56th St. (JU 6-9063): Bart Howard's piano graces dinnertime, and Jim Mahoney's piano improves the midnight hours. Closed Mondays. . . . **HABIBI,** 227 W. 46th St. (JU 6-1978): A showcase for strolling players from Israel, wherein Shoshana Damari raises her beguiling voice. Closed Mondays. . . . **CAFÉ MADISON,** Madison Ave. at 58th St. (EL 5-5000): Piano music from six to nine Mondays through Fridays, and Bernie Dolen's orchestra for dancing between the same hours on Saturdays and from noon to nine on Sundays.



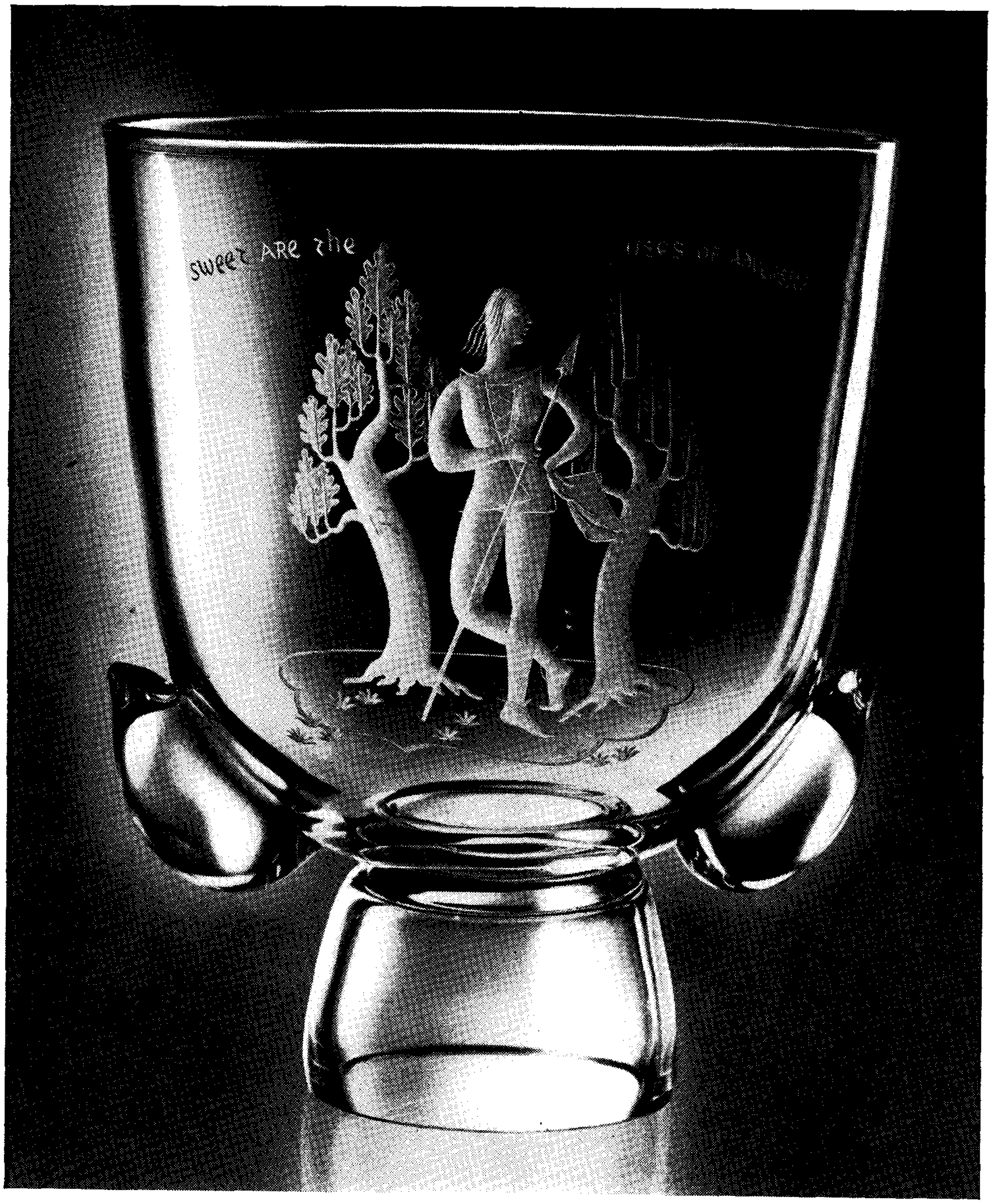
BIG AND BRASSY

COPACABANA, 10 E. 60th St. (PL 8-1060): Jimmy Durante, still one of our most comical campaigners, who can even outtalk any of the ringside customers. Maria Gambarelli, on consignment from the ballet world, is a surprise added starter. Dancing. . . . **OLD KNICK MUSIC HALL,** Second Ave. at 54th St. (PL 9-2724): Period-piece melodrama of no great moment, plus (fortunately) Betty Lou Barto, an engaging elf, and Paul Killiam's impish commentary on senile movies. Dancing. Closed Mondays. . . . **CAFÉ SOCIETY,** 2 Sheridan Sq. (CH 2-2737): Arthur Blake, a fairly salty impersonator, and Ann Hathaway, who sings, work hard in the hubbub here. Cliff Jackson is beginning his second century as the interlude pianist. Dancing. . . . **LATIN QUARTER,** Broadway at 48th St. (CI 6-1737): There may even be a kitchen stove in this primarily girl show, but the masterly Señor Wences and his puppets are the best reason for stopping in. Dancing.

SUPPER CLUBS

(No dancing, unless noted.)

BLUE ANGEL, 152 E. 55th St. (PL 3-5998): Dorothy Greener, a waif with a heart of gold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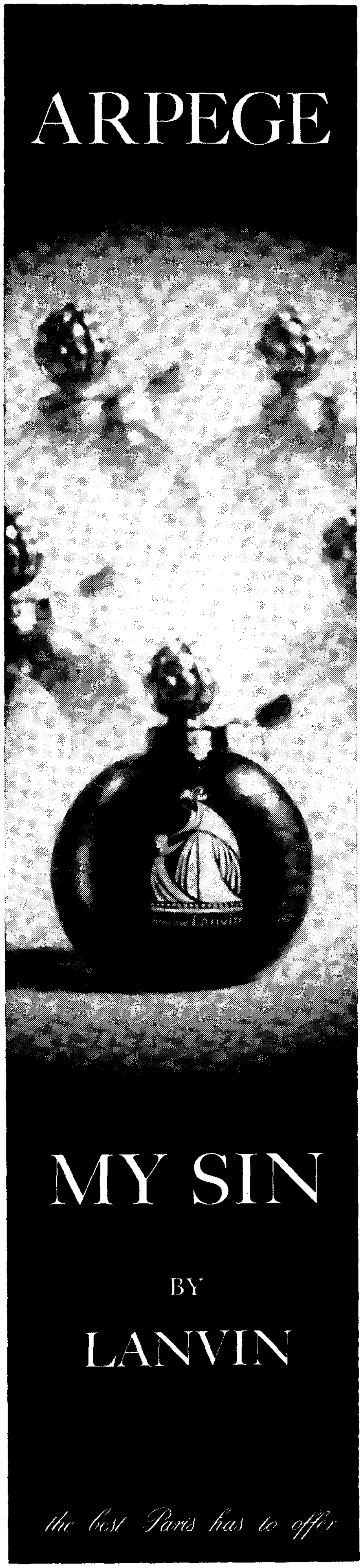

BOTTLED AND PACKAGED IN FRANCE

GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

and a throat of iron, explains her rather basic outlook on life. The Mad Moiselles romp perilously, and Portia Nelson and Martha Davis sing to the upbeat music of the inspired Page Cavanaugh Trio. Stuart Ross plays solo piano. On Thursday, April 5, the matchless Alice Pearce returns to night life here. Hugh Wakefield, an English wit, and Les Crosley (in charge of a trio) will also arrive, and Miss Greener and the Mad Moiselles will move on. . . . ¶ Except Saturdays, Eadie and Rack do their four-hand piano in the lounge after the theatre. Earlier in the evening, except Mondays, John Kelley, Jr., operates singlehanded. . . . **LE RUBAN BLEU**, 4 E. 56th St. (PL 3-6426): Michael Brown, that macabre minnesinger, is making a brief return to Julius Monk's playroom. Kirkwood and Goodman read their celebrated riot act, the Three Riffs pop their amusing offhand gags, and Pat Carroll, a girl on whose bright face the hallmark of the born humorist is already visible, looks fresh out of Vassar. Norman Paris, the boy genius, and his trio, a whole school of modern music in themselves, are the backdrop. Closed Sundays. . . . **VILLAGE VANGUARD**, 178 Seventh Ave. S., at 11th St. (CH 2-9355): Charlotte Rae, a clever enough mockingbird, is back at her original stand. Royce Wallace, a fetching example of the dollmaker's art, sings the way she looks, and (through Sunday, April 1) Hillel and Aviva do Israeli ballads. Clarence Williams' trio, which has Karl Lynch on guitar, plays real gone dance music. Closed Mondays. . . . **ONE FIFTH AVENUE**, Fifth Ave. at 8th St. (SP 7-7000): Herb Corey's breezy parodies, and Lois Livingston's songs. Double piano by Bob Downey and Harold Fonville, solo piano by Hazel Webster. Ancient movies Sunday nights; Mondays are amateur nights. . . . **BYLINE ROOM**, 137 E. 52nd St. (PL 3-4750): Mabel Mercer, foremost interpreter of the songs of Alec Wilder and other modernist composers, is in her parlor upstairs over the convulsive Show Spot bar Mondays through Saturdays. Sam Hamilton, a good man in his own right, is her pianist. . . . **BON SOIR**, 40 W. 8th St. (OR 4-0531): Mildred Bailey going ding-dong-ding-dong-ding to the pretty music of Luther Henderson, Gene Fields, and Beverly Reel. Jimmie Daniels sings his bilingual bevy of love songs, and Jimmy Komack and Martin Burns contribute some very funny noises. Closed Mondays. . . . **CHEZ VITO**, Hotel Meurice, 145 W. 58th St. (PL 7-0083): Except Mondays, Pat Rainey, a barely domesticated lady panther, whispers some lush-life lyrics to Ellis Larkin's minor-key piano. . . . **SPIVY'S ROOF**, 139 E. 57th St. (PL 3-9322): A very casual bar, where Spivy, when she's in the mood, stirs up a batch of her single-entendre ditties. Closed Sundays.

MOSTLY FOR MUSIC

(No dancing, unless noted.)

EDDIE CONDON'S, 47 W. 3rd St. (GR 5-8639): Wild Bill Davison's to-the-life impersonation of the Angel Gabriel. He is urged on by Cutty Cutshall, Buzzy Drootin, Edmond Hall, Bob Casey, Gene Schroeder, and Mr. Condon Ralph Sutton does the interlude solo work, a fine demonstration of fifty-finger piano exercises. Tuesday nights, when other sharpshooters drop in for target practice, are often sheer bedlam. Closed Sundays. . . . **THE EMBERS**, 161 E. 54th St. (PL 9-3228): The newest and most opulent temple of the fine arts, in which (after nine-thirty) Joe Bushkin's piano leads Buck Clayton and his other aides a merry chase. The venerable and venerated Art Tatum is the piano soloist. . . . **NICK'S**, Seventh Ave. S. at 10th St. (CH 2-6683): Pee Wee Erwin's Dixieland band is sounding off here. Sunday afternoon is jam-session time. Closed Mondays. . . . **JIMMY RYAN'S**, 53 W. 52nd St. (EL 5-9600): Conrad Janis's band, with Elmer Schoebel on piano and Fred Moore on drums. Don Frye is at the piano between sets. Jam sessions Monday nights. Dancing. . . . **BIRDLAND**, 1678 Broadway, at 52nd St. (JU 6-1368): It's hard to be sure who's here at a given moment, but the spirit is always one of fractured melody blown forth with a great good will. . . . **STUYVESANT CASINO**, 140 Second Ave., at 9th St. (GR 3-5289): Those Friday-night rocking-the-boat parties are still going on. On March 30, Wild Bill Davison, Lou McGarity, Max Kaminsky, Jimmy McPartland, Ray McKinley, and Red Allen. . . . **CENTRAL PLAZA**, 111 Second Ave., at 6th St. (AL 4-9800): Another Friday-night barbecue, serving up (on March 30) Willie the Lion Smith, Joe Thomas, and Big Chief Russell Moore. Dancing.

ART

(Unless *otherwise* noted, galleries are open weekdays from around 10 to between 5 and 6.)

GALLERIES

Herbert Barnett—Oils and drawings, including figure paintings and a variety of Maine scenes. (Levitt, 559 Madison Ave., at 56th St.; through April 14.)

Ben-Zion—Recent oils, demonstrating his ability to invest even the simplest subjects with intensity and charm. (Bertha Schaefer, 32 E. 57th St.; through April 7.)

Kenneth Evett—Landscapes and other works, pleasantly combining the representational with a touch of the abstract. (Kraushaar, 32 E. 57th St.; through March 31.)

Expressionists—Paintings by such European exponents of this style as Munch, Kirchner, Nolde, and Soutine. (Feigl, 601 Madison Ave., at 57th St.; through April 21.)

Henri Fantin-Latour—Still-lifes, portraits, and figure studies, in the first exhibition here since 1932, of work by the nineteenth-century French artist. (Scott & Fowles, 745 Fifth Ave., at 57th St.; through April 14.)

Antonio Frasconi—Woodcuts, handsomely executed, by a rising young practitioner of this ancient art. (Weyhe, 794 Lexington Ave., at 61st St.; through April 11.)

William Gropper—Paintings of Europe, from France and Italy to Poland and Bulgaria, in this artist's first showing in six years. (Associated American Artists, 711 Fifth Ave., at 55th St.; through April 7.)

Group Shows—At the **GRAND CENTRAL MODERNS**, 130 E. 56th St.: Landscapes and figure paintings by gallery members, among them Byron Browne, Xavier Gonzàlez, and Ernestine Betsberg; through April 7. . . . **ROSENBERG**, 16 E. 57th St.: New oils by Milton Avery, Marsden Hartley, Karl Knaths, Abraham Rattner, and Max Weber; through March 31. . . . **VIVIANO**, 42 E. 57th St.: Paintings, sculptures, and drawings by American and Italian artists under forty, including Emilio Vedova, Carlyle Brown, Mirko, and Emmanuel Viviano; through March 31.

Henry Koerner—A fresh set of paintings and drawings (the former, unfortunately, a bit monotonous in texture) by one of the newer American "super-realists." (Midtown, 605 Madison Ave., at 58th St.; through March 31.)

Fernand Léger—A well-chosen collection of his early (1911-25) paintings, centering on his Dynamist, or mechanistic, phase. (Janis, 15 E. 57th St.; through April 7.)

Jean Lurçat—Recent gouaches, adroitly exploiting the possibilities of such subjects as grasshoppers, turtles, and butterflies. (Passedoit, 121 E. 57th St.; through March 31.)

René Magritte—New paintings by the Belgian Surrealist, with some delightfully fresh adventures both in color and in ideas. (Hugo, 26 E. 55th St.; through April 10.)

Joan Miró—A small retrospective, 1946 to the present, showing this Spanish modernist at his gayest and most fanciful. (Pierre Matisse, 41 E. 57th St.; through March 31.)

Modern French—At the **NIVEAU**, 63 E. 57th St.: Paintings by Rouault, Modigliani, Bombois, and others; through March 31. . . . **PERLS**, 32 E. 58th St.: The second part of this gallery's yearly modern French show offers two dozen paintings by Vlaminck, Friesz, Braque, Picasso, and others; through April 21.

Henry Moore—A fine, varied array of sculptures, with some drawings, by the prominent British abstractionist. (Buchholz, 32 E. 57th St.; through March 31.)

Grandma Moses—A retrospective selection of twenty-five canvases by the ninety-year-old primitive. (St. Etienne, 46 W. 57th St.; through April 20.)

National Academy of Design—The hundred-and-twenty-sixth annual exhibition of paintings, sculptures, and prints by members and other

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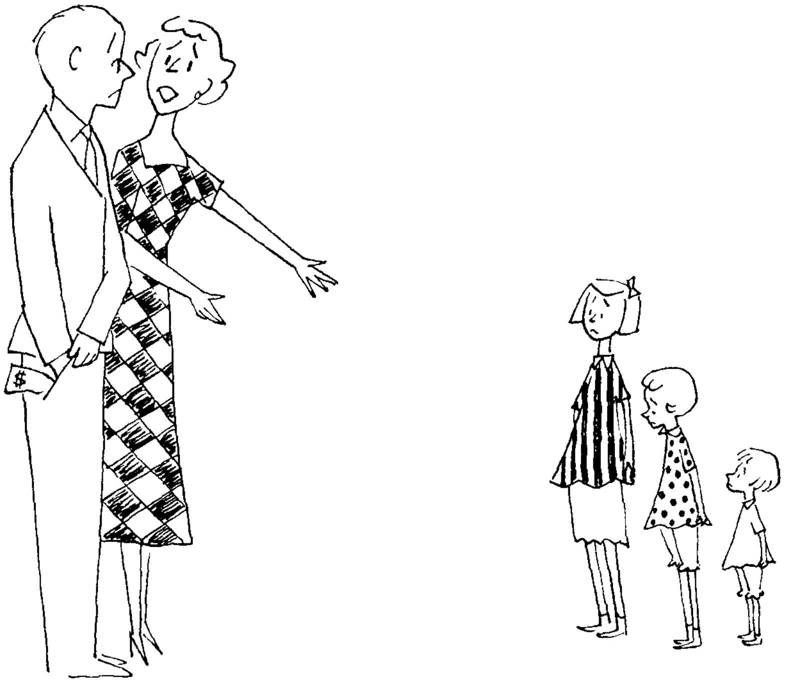

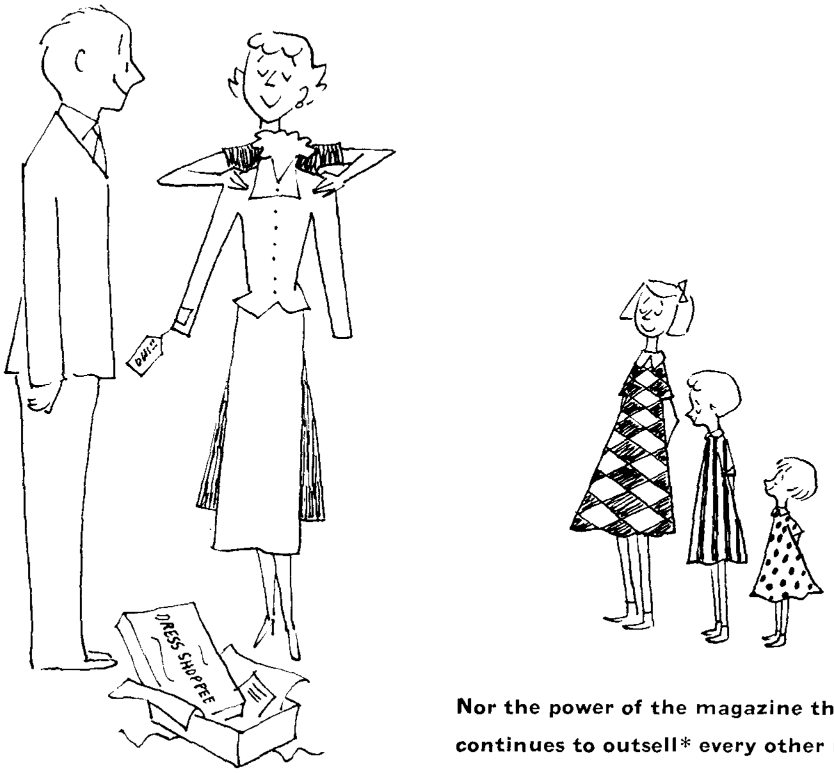

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GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

artists. (Fifth Ave. at 89th St. Daily, 1 to 5; through April 8.)

RUBENS—A loan show, for the benefit of the Public Education Association, and, rather amazingly, the first really comprehensive exhibition of the great Flemish painter's works in this city. (Wildenstein, 19 E. 64th St. Weekdays, 10 to 5:30; Sundays, 1 to 5; through April 14.)

CHARLES SHEELER—Paintings, done with his usual finish, precision, and austerity. (Downtown, 32 E. 51st St.; through March 31.)

THEO VAN DOESBURG—Selected works by one of the founders, with Mondrian, of the non-objective school of modern painting. (Fried, 40 E. 68th St. Weekdays, 1:30 to 5:30; through March 31.)

SOME OF THIS WEEK'S OPENINGS—At the **BABCOCK**, 38 E. 57th St.: Jacob Getlar Smith; through April 14. . . . **CARRÉ**, 712 Fifth Ave., at 56th St.: Fernand Léger; through April 21. . . . **DELIUS**, 18 E. 64th St.: Still-lifes and flower paintings; through April 28. . . . **MACBETH**, 11 E. 57th St.: Herman Maril; through April 14. . . . **REHN**, 683 Fifth Ave., at 54th St.: Peppino Mangravite; through April 14. . . . **SCULPTURE CENTER**, 167 E. 69th St.: Leo Amino. Mondays through Fridays, 2 to 5 and 7 to 10; Saturdays, 2 to 5; through April 21. . . . **WILLARD**, 32 E. 57th St.: David Smith; through April 21.

MUSEUMS

BROOKLYN MUSEUM, Eastern Parkway—The Fifth National Print Annual, comprising etchings, engravings, woodcuts, lithographs, and serigraphs; through May 20. . . . ¶ Primitive Indian art of Alaska and Canada; through April 15. (Weekdays, 10 to 5; Sundays, 1 to 5.)

METROPOLITAN MUSEUM, Fifth Ave. at 82nd St.—The Art Students League's seventy-fifth anniversary show, consisting of paintings and sculptures done by seventy-five artists associated at one time or another with the League; through April 29. . . . ¶ Water colors, drawings, and oil paintings portraying Paris during the early nineteen-hundreds, among them more than fifty water colors by Pierre Vidal; through April 15. (Weekdays, 10 to 5; Sundays, 1 to 5.)

MUSEUM OF MODERN ART, 11 W. 53rd St.—The current fare here includes a display of recent additions to the Museum's collection of paintings and sculpture, some photographs of the Korean war, and a set of pictures by Swedish children. (Weekdays, noon to 7; Sundays, 1 to 7.)

MUSEUM OF NON-OBJECTIVE PAINTING, 1071 Fifth Ave., at 89th St.—The present group exhibition, with works by Hilla Rebay, Josef Albers, and others, will run through April 1. A new group show will open on April 3. (Tuesdays through Saturdays, 10 to 6; Sundays, noon to 6.)

RIVERSIDE MUSEUM, 310 Riverside Dr., at 103rd St.—A showing by the American Abstract Artists organization, including works by three deceased members—Piet Mondrian, Ladislas Moholy-Nagy, and R. D. Turnbull—along with exhibits by some Danish and British abstract painters and sculptors. (Daily, 1 to 5; through April 7.)

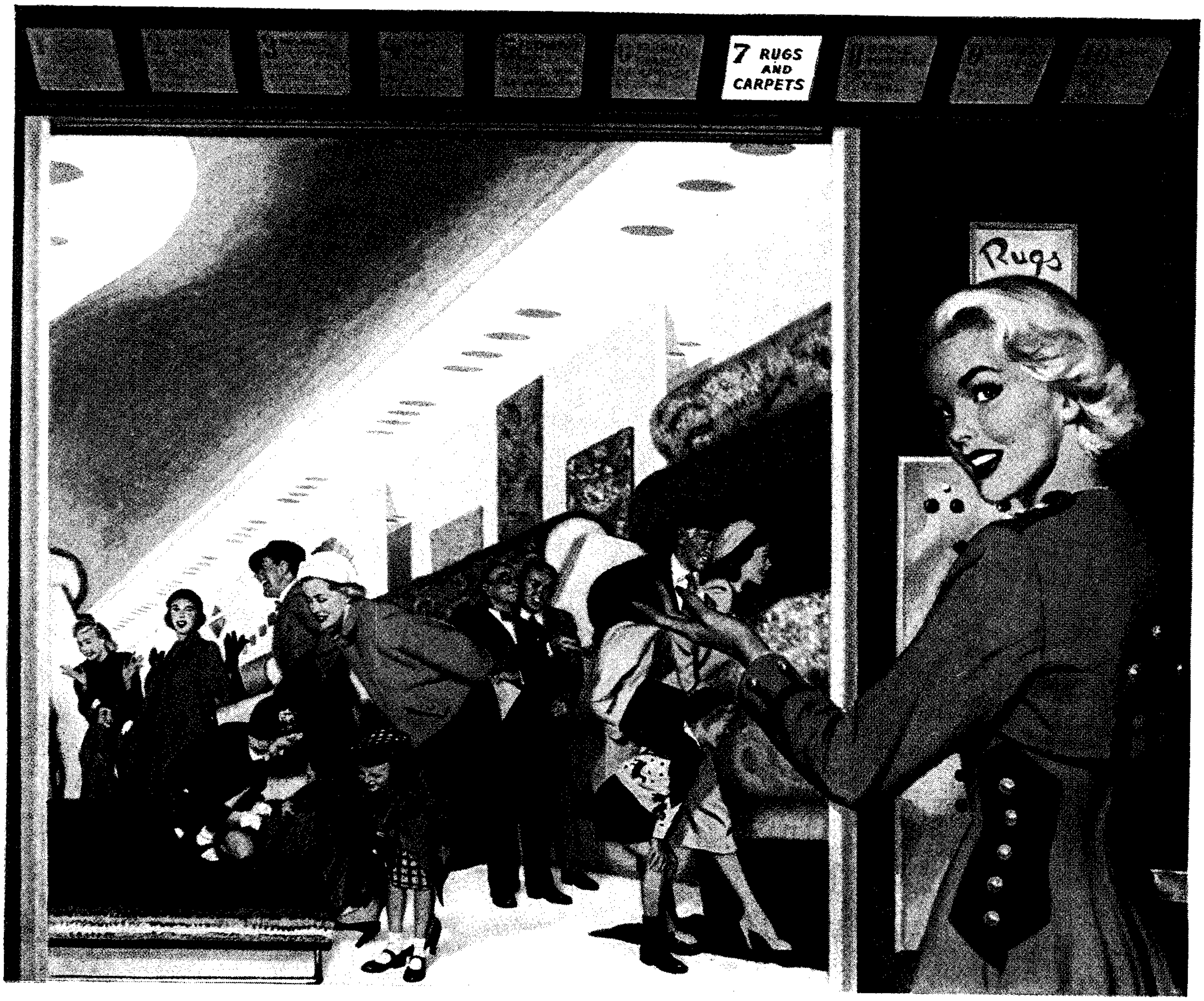
WHITNEY MUSEUM, 10 W. 8th St.—The Museum's 1951 Annual of Contemporary American Sculpture, Water Colors, and Drawings. (Daily, except Mondays, 1 to 5; through May 6.)

MUSIC

(The box-office number for Carnegie Hall is CI 7-7460, for Town Hall LU 2-4536, and for the Metropolitan Opera House PE 6-1210. Other numbers are included in the listings.)

OPERA

METROPOLITAN OPERA—Final performances of the season—Thursday, March 29, at 8:30: "Madame Butterfly," with Licia Albanese, Margaret Roggero, Charles Kullman, and Francesco Valentino. . . . ¶ Friday, March 30, at 8:30: "La Bohème," with Victoria de los Angeles, Lois Hunt, Giuseppe Di Stefano, and Giuseppe Valdengo. (A benefit for the Free Milk Fund for Babies; *for tickets, call* BR 9-9000.) . . . ¶ Saturday, March 31, at 2: "Fledermaus," with Marguerite Piazza,



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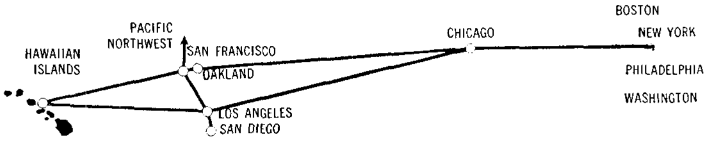
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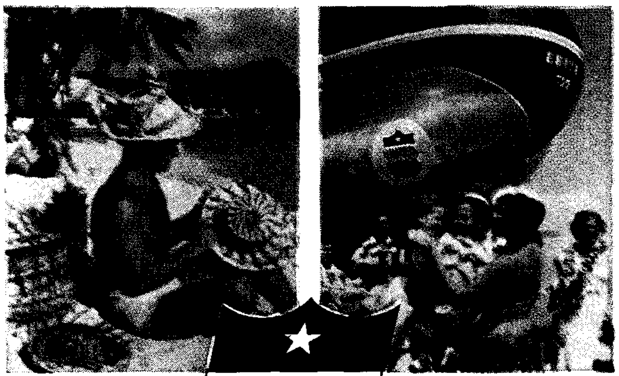

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GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

Patrice Munsel, Brian Sullivan, and Charles Kullman. . . . ¶ Saturday, March 31, at 8:30: "La Traviata," with Delia Rigal, Margaret Roggero, Richard Tucker, and Leonard Warren. . . . ¶ Thursday, April 5, at 8:15: "Fledermaus," with Regina Resnik, Patrice Munsel, Charles Kullman, and Eugene Conley. . . . ¶ Friday, April 6, at 8:30: "La Bohème," with Victoria de los Angeles, Anne Bollinger, Jan Peerce, and Giuseppe Valdengo. . . . ¶ Saturday, April 7, at 2: "The Barber of Seville," with Lily Pons, Herta Glaz, Eugene Conley, and Robert Merrill. . . . ¶ Saturday, April 7, at 8:15: "Fledermaus," with Marguerite Piazza, Patrice Munsel, Charles Kullman, and Brian Sullivan.

New York City Opera Company—Thursday, March 29, at 8:15: "The Tales of Hoffmann." . . . ¶ Friday, March 30, at 8:15: "Don Giovanni." . . . ¶ Saturday, March 31, at 1:30: "Die Meistersinger." . . . ¶ Saturday, March 31, at 8:15: "La Traviata." . . . ¶ Sunday, April 1, at 2:30: "Madame Butterfly." . . . ¶ Sunday, April 1, at 8:15: "The Love for Three Oranges" (in English). . . . ¶ Wednesday, April 4, at 7:30: "Die Meistersinger." . . . ¶ Friday, April 6, at 8:15: "Aïda." . . . ¶ Saturday, April 7, at 2:30: "Carmen." . . . ¶ Saturday, April 7, at 8:15: "The Marriage of Figaro" (in English). (City Center, 131 W. 55th St. CI 6-8989. The season will continue through Sunday, April 22.)

Giants in the Earth—An opera based on the novel by O. E. Rölvaag, with a libretto by Arnold Sundgaard and music by Douglas Moore. Produced by the Columbia Theatre Associates and the Columbia Opera Workshop, and directed by Felix Brentano. (Brander Matthews Theatre, 420 W. 117th St. UN 4-3200, Ext. 2135. Nightly, except Sunday and Monday, at 8:40. Through Saturday, April 7.)

ORCHESTRAS AND CHORUSES

Philharmonic-Symphony—At Carnegie Hall—Dimitri Mitropoulos conducting: Thursday, March 29, at 8:45, and Friday, March 30, at 2:30 (both with Mr. Mitropoulos as piano soloist). . . . ¶ Franco Autori conducting: Saturday, March 31, at 8:45 (with Andor Foldes, piano). . . . ¶ Dimitri Mitropoulos conducting: Sunday, April 1, at 2:45 (with Mr. Mitropoulos as piano soloist); Thursday, April 5, at 8:45, and Friday, April 6, at 2:30 (both with Leonard Rose, cello); and Saturday, April 7, at 8:45 (with Sidney Foster, piano).

Philadelphia Orchestra—Eugene Ormandy conducting a program of Scandinavian music, with Erik Tuxen as guest conductor, and with Set Svanholm, tenor, and Simon Barere, piano. (Carnegie Hall. Monday, April 2, at 8:30.)

Little Orchestra Society—Thomas Scherman conducting, with Erica Morini, violin; Frank Glazer, piano; and others. (Town Hall. Monday, April 2, at 8:30.)

Vienna Choir Boys—Peter Lacovich directing. (McMillin Theatre, Broadway at 116th St. UN 4-3200, Ext. 2461. Thursday, March 29, at 8:30.)

Middlebury College Choir—H. Ward Bedford directing. (Town Hall. Friday, March 30, at 8:30.)

Zilberts Choral Society—Seymour Silbermintz directing. (Town Hall. Sunday, April 1, at 8:30.)

Hood College Choir—Earle Blakeslee directing. (Town Hall. Monday, April 2, at 3.)

Harvard Glee Club and Radcliffe Choral Society—G. Wallace Woodworth directing, with Augusto Rodriguez as guest director. (Times Hall, 240 W. 44th St. Tuesday, April 3, at 8:45. For tickets, call CH 2-0813.)

New York University Glee Club—Alfred M. Greenfield directing. (Town Hall. Friday, April 6, at 8:30.)

Helvetia Maennerchor of New York—A Swiss male chorus, directed by Germain P. Lachat. (Town Hall. Saturday, April 7, at 8:30.)

RECITALS

Sascha Gorodnitzki—Piano. (Washington Irving High School, Irving Pl. at 16th St. Sat-

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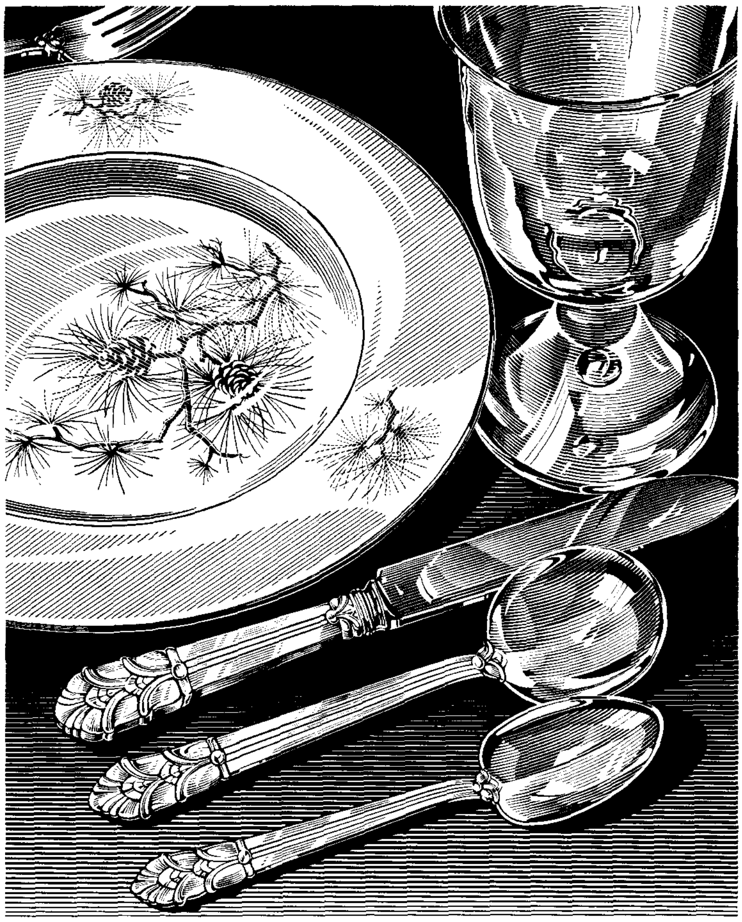

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GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

urday, March 31, at 8:15. For tickets, call GR 3-1391.)

Regina Resnik—Soprano. (Hunter College Assembly Hall, Park Ave. at 69th St. RE 7-8490. Saturday, March 31, at 8:30.)

New Music String Quartet—Chamber music. (McMillin Theatre, Broadway at 116th St. UN 4-3200, Ext. 2461. Saturday, March 31, at 8:30.)

Artur Rubinstein—Piano. (Carnegie Hall. Sunday, April 1, at 8:30.)

Alexander Schneider and Eugene Istomin—Violin and piano, in two programs of Beethoven sonatas. (Kaufmann Auditorium, Y.M.H.A., Lexington Ave. at 92nd St. AT 9-9456. Sunday, April 1, and Wednesday, April 4, at 8:40.)

Budapest String Quartet—Chamber music. (Kaufmann Auditorium, Y.M.H.A., Lexington Ave. at 92nd St. AT 9-9456. Monday, April 2, at 8:40.)

Jorge Bolet—Piano. (Carnegie Hall. Tuesday, April 3, at 8:30.)

Julian Károlyi—Piano. (Carnegie Hall. Wednesday, April 4, at 8:30.)

Ralph Kirkpatrick—Harpsichord. (Town Hall. Wednesday, April 4, at 8:30.)

Susan Reed—Folk singer. (McMillin Theatre, Broadway at 116th St. UN 4-3200, Ext. 2461. Thursday, April 5, at 8:30.)

Sylvia Marlowe—Harpsichord, with the Kroll Quartet; Julius Baker, flute; and others. (Town Hall. Saturday, April 7, at 5:30.)

Loewenguth Quartet—Chamber music. (Washington Irving High School, Irving Pl. at 16th St. Saturday, April 7, at 8:15. For tickets, call GR 3-1391.)

MISCELLANY

Kurt Weill Concert—Lotte Lenya-Weill, Dolly Haas, Grete Mosheim, Inez Matthews, Stefan Schnabel, Ralph Herbert, Victor Clarke, and others. (Kaufmann Auditorium, Y.M.H.A., Lexington Ave. at 92nd St. AT 9-9456. Saturday, March 31, at 8:40.)

SPORTS

(The box-office number for Madison Square Garden is CO 5-6811.)

Boxing—Kid Gavilan vs. Eugene Hairston, middleweights, 10 rounds. (Madison Square Garden. Friday, March 30. Preliminaries at 8:30; main bout at 10.)

College Basketball—East-West All-Star game, for the benefit of the *Herald Tribune* Fresh Air Fund. (Madison Square Garden. Saturday, March 31, at 7:45.)

Professional Basketball—National Basketball Association Championship Playoffs, Eastern Division: Knicks vs. Syracuse. (Madison Square Garden. Saturday, March 31, at 3.)

Horse Show—Ox Ridge Hunt Club Horse Show. (Darien, Conn. Saturday, March 31.)

Indoor Polo—Saturday, March 31: Final match of the Eastern Twelve-Goal Championship, and another game. . . . ¶ Saturday, April 7: First matches of the National Senior Championship. (Squadron A Armory, Madison Ave. at 94th St. AT 9-6020. Matches begin at 8:30.)

Racing—At **JAMAICA:** Weekdays at 1:15, from Monday, April 2, through Saturday, May 12. The Paumonok Handicap, Monday, April 2; the Experimental Free Handicap No. 1, Wednesday, April 4; and the Excelsior Handicap, Saturday, April 7. (Frequent trains will leave Penn Station for the track Mondays through Fridays between 10:45 and 1, and Saturdays between 10:45 and 1:25.) . . . **LAUREL PARK,** Laurel, Md.: Weekdays at 1:30; through Thursday, April 19.

FOR CHILDREN

Concert—The Little Orchestra Society, Thomas Scherman conducting, in an audience-participation concert performance of "H.M.S. Pinafore." (Hunter College Assembly Hall, Park Ave. at 69th St. Saturday, April 7, at 11. For tickets, call CI 5-5159.)

Operetta—The Blue Hill Troupe presenting a special children's performance of Gilbert and Sullivan's "The Pirates of Penzance" and "Trial by Jury." For the benefit of the Manhattan Eye, Ear, and Throat Hospital. (Hunter Playhouse, Park Ave. at 68th St. Saturday, March 31, at 2:30. For tickets, call BU 8-8302.)

Plays—By the **CHILDREN'S WORLD THEATRE:** "Ali Baba." (Barbizon-Plaza Theatre, Sixth Ave. at 58th St. Thursday through Saturday, March 29-31, at 2:30. For tickets, call PE 6-5536.) . . . **JUNIOR PLAYHOUSE:** "Hänsel and Gretel." (Kaufmann Auditorium, Y.M.H.A., Lexington Ave. at 92nd St. AT 9-9456. Thursday and Friday, March 29-30, and Sunday, April 1, at 3.) . . . **PLAY-MART:** Saturday, March 31, "Sleeping Beauty.". . . ¶ Saturday, April 7, "Beauty and the Beast." (Carl Fischer Concert Hall, 165 W. 57th St. Performances at 1:30 and 3:15. For tickets, call TR 7-7591.) . . . **SALOME GAYNOR THEATRE:** "Hans Brinker; or, The Silver Skates." (Brooklyn Academy of Music, 30 Lafayette Ave. ST 3-6700. Saturday, March 31, at 3.)

OTHER EVENTS

United Nations—At Lake Success, Mondays through Fridays, there may be occasional open meetings of the Security Council, the Atomic Energy Commission, the Commission on Conventional Armaments, and the Interim Committee of the General Assembly. About five hundred visitors can be accommodated at each meeting. For tickets, call Fleldstone 7-1100, Ext. 2253, the day before you want to go. Frequent trains leave Penn Station for Great Neck, where they connect with buses for Lake Success. Incidentally, questions about the United Nations can be answered by the Information Center for the United Nations, 220 W. 45th St., JU 2-0233.

The French Theatre—Books by and about Molière, plus prints and other items relating to the theatre in seventeenth- and eighteenth-century France. (Berès Gallery, 6 W. 56th St. Weekdays, 10 to 5:30; through Saturday, April 14.)

Hayden Planetarium—The March show is called "Easter in the Heavens." Starting Sunday, April 1, there will be a new show, "Seeing the Invisible," which deals with astral bodies, billions of light-years away, that can be seen only through high-powered telescopes. (Central Park W. at 81st St. Special Easter Week schedule continues Thursday and Friday, March 29-30, with showings at 11, 2, 3, 4, and 8:30. Thereafter, the regular schedule will be resumed, with showings on Saturdays at 11, 2, 3, 4, 5, and 8:30; Sundays at 2, 3, 4, 5, and 8:30; and Mondays through Fridays at 2, 3:30, and 8:30.)

Auction—At the Parke-Bernet Galleries, 980 Madison Ave., at 76th St.—Louis XV, Louis XVI, and other French furniture; paintings by Gainsborough, Vigée-Lebrun, and others; sculptures; tapestries and rugs; and glass and silver, from the estate of the late Samuel G. Archibald and from other sources. (Exhibition Thursday, March 29, from 10 to 5. Auction Friday and Saturday, March 30-31, at 1:45.)

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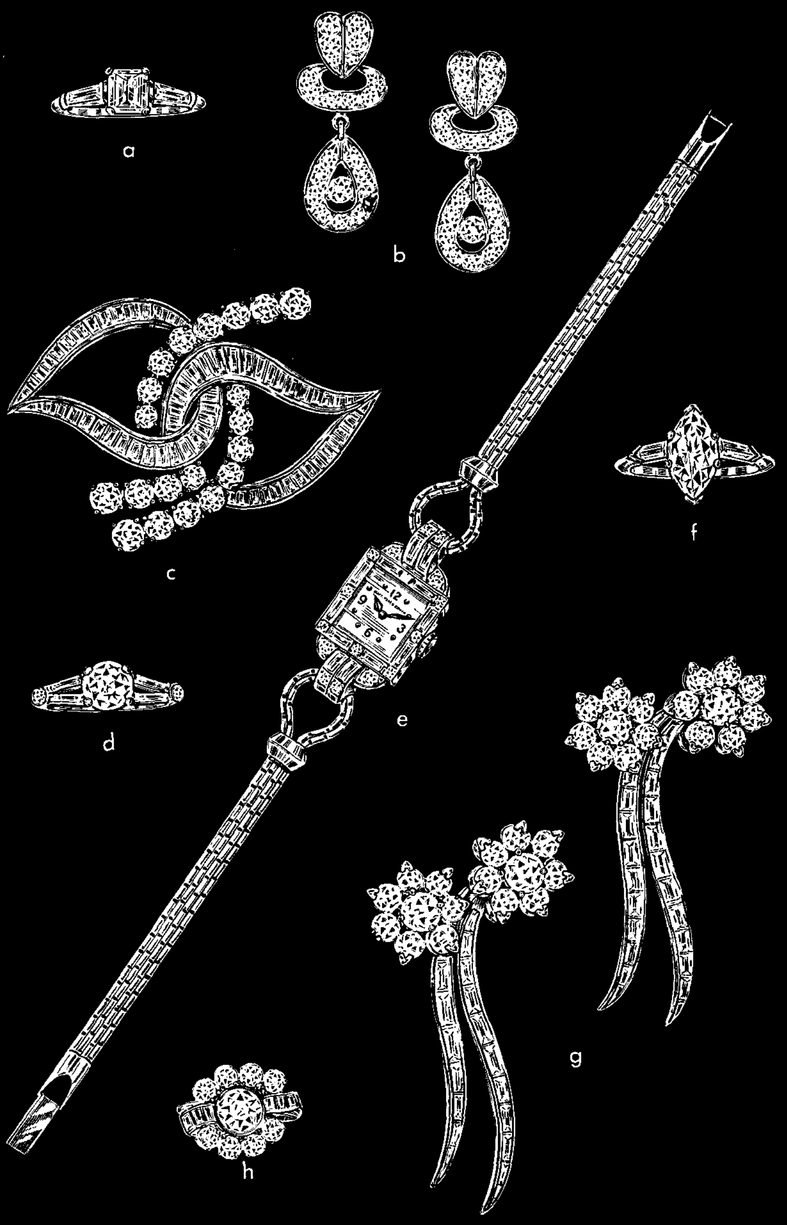
Note—Volunteers are needed in every department of civil-defense work. Twenty categories of assignment have been set up; a few demand professional or technical skills, but most are open to anyone of stout heart, limb, and determination. Among the branches of service are the Auxiliary Police Corps, the Ground Observer Corps, the Fire Department Auxiliary Fire Corps, and the Auxiliary Communications Corps. Also, air wardens, hospital aids, radiation monitors, litter bearers, clerical workers, and messengers are required. All hospitals and precinct police stations and most district firehouses are now able to handle applications for enlistment. Further information can be had from the five borough recruiting offices: 500 Park Ave., at 59th St. (MU 8-6940), in Manhattan; 2 Court St. (MAin 4-7681), in Brooklyn; Borough Hall, 120-55 Queens Blvd. (BOulevard 3-0916), in Queens; Bronx County Court House, 161st St. and Grand Concourse (LUdlow 8-4289), in the Bronx; and Borough Hall, St. George, S.I. (GIbraltar 7-1000, Ext. 32), in Richmond. . . . ¶ Blood donations for the armed forces are, of course, also urgently sought. To make an appointment, call the Red Cross Chapter, 70 W. 40th St., MU 9-1000.



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GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

MOTION PICTURES

FILMS OF MORE THAN ROUTINE INTEREST ARE DESCRIBED IN THIS SECTION

All About Eve—How a young and despicable lady gets to be the equivalent of a Duse on the stage. Witty, entertaining, and, by and large, highly satisfactory, though perhaps overlong. Among the participants are Bette Davis, Anne Baxter, Celeste Holm, and George Sanders. (68th St. Playhouse, 3rd Ave. at 68th, RE 4-0302; through April 4, tentative. . . . ¶ Trans-Lux 85th St., Madison at 85th, BU 8-3180; March 30-31. . . . ¶ Art, 36 E. 8th, GR 3-7014; starting March 30.)

Bitter Rice—A violent Italian account of the way the lady rice harvesters in the Po Valley conduct themselves in and out of the fields. Silvana Mangano is superb as the steamiest of the workers. (World, 153 W. 49th, CI 7-5747.)

Born Yesterday—A movie version of Garson Kanin's play concerning a junkman's mistress who learns about democracy and throws the old man over because he's a Fascist. Judy Holliday repeats the hilarious performance she gave in this comedy when it was on Broadway. (Victoria, B'way at 46th, JU 6-0540.)

Cyrano de Bergerac—The old Rostand drama, enthusiastically, if footlessly, enacted by a large cast, headed by José Ferrer. The picture is faithful to all the hokum, from rakehell swordplay to poetic gags about the hero's nose, but by this time none of it seems terribly worth while. (Bijou, 209 W. 45th, CO 5-8215; through April 3. . . . ¶ Golden, 252 W. 45th, CI 6-6740; starting April 4. Showings at both theatres are at 2:30 and 8:30; extra performances Saturdays and Sundays at 5:30, and Saturday evenings at 11:30. Reserved seats only.)

Fourteen Hours—A tense description of the backings and fillings of an upset youth perched on a ledge high above Manhattan. Richard Basehart does a fine job as the distraught hero caught in this lofty dilemma, and he is ably assisted by Paul Douglas, Agnes Moorehead, Robert Keith, and Barbara Bel Geddes. (Astor, B'way at 45th, JU 6-2240.)

God Needs Men—A peculiar but interesting French film about a fisherman on an island off Brittany who decides to take over the job of ministering to the religious needs of his fellows after priests from the mainland have given them up as a hopelessly bad lot. Pierre Fresnay makes a believable character of the fisherman, and the actors who surround him seem equally authentic. (Paris, 4 W. 58th, MU 8-0134.)

Halls of Montezuma—The Marines doing their celebrated stuff in the South Pacific. Pretty stimulating, except for some moments when the action is stopped to permit the sound track to unload some extravagant flag-waving rhetoric. Richard Widmark leads the leathernecks. (Waverly, 6th Ave. at 3rd, WA 9-8038; April 1-2.)

The Happiest Days of Your Life—A comic English film about the unexpected merger of a boys' school and a girls' school, with Alastair Sim and Margaret Rutherford guiding the little ones through all kinds of confusion. (Gramercy, Lexington at 23rd, GR 5-1660; through March 31.)

Harvey—The invisible rabbit who pals around with a charming drunk. James Stewart does a nice job in this adaptation of the Mary Chase comedy, and Josephine Hull lends him tremendous assistance. (8th St. Playhouse, 52 W. 8th, GR 7-7874; through March 31. . . . ¶ Murray Hill, Park at 42nd, MU 2-1431; March 30-31. . . . ¶ Gramercy, Lexington at 23rd, GR 5-1660; April 1-4. . . . ¶ Plaza, 42 E. 58th, EL 5-3320; starting April 2.)

Macbeth—Orson Welles in a knockdown, drag-out bout with the Bard. Incoherent a good bit of the time, because of Mr. Welles' fondness for reading his lines with what purports to be a Scottish accent, but full of frenzied action. (Greenwich, Greenwich Ave. at 12th, WA 9-3350; starting April 4.)

The Mudlark—A picture having to do with a poverty-stricken lad who visits Windsor Castle and cures Queen Victoria of the megrims that have afflicted her since noble Albert passed away. Irene Dunne makes a very stiff Victoria, but Andrew Ray is delightful as the boy. (Gracie Square, 1st Ave. at 89th, SA 2-2478; through March 30. . . . ¶ Trans-Lux Colony, 2nd Ave. at 79th, BU 8-9468; and Greenwich, Greenwich Ave. at 12th, WA 9-3350; through March 31. . . . ¶ Waverly, 6th Ave. at 3rd, WA 9-8038; March 30-31. . . . ¶ Carlton, B'way at 100th, AC 2-3862; April 1-3. . . . ¶ Trans-Lux 85th St., Madison at 85th, BU 8-3180; April 1-4. . . . ¶ York, 1st Ave. at 64th, RH 4-9350; April 3-4.)

Odette—The adventures of a French lady who served with the British Military Intelligence as an underground agent in France throughout most of the last war. Based on fact, this English picture is livelier than almost any trumped-up spy drama you ever saw. Anna Neagle and Trevor Howard head the trilingual cast. (Park Avenue, Park at 59th, PL 9-7242.)

Orpheus—What might happen if a modern-dress Orpheus tried to follow the plot of the ancient legend in the hope of rescuing his wife from a new-day Hell. A French film cooked up by Jean Cocteau, and full of ingenious and often amusing touches. (Trans-Lux 72nd St., 1st Ave. at 72nd, BU 8-9304; through March 31.)

Seven Days to Noon—The mad-scientist theme. This time, the distracted expert is loose in London with a sort of minuscule atomic bomb and is planning to blow up most of the city if the government doesn't agree to stop making the weapon. A British picture, worth seeing if only because it shows how efficiently a modern metropolis could be reduced to deathly silence by one well-equipped man. With Barry Jones and Olive Sloane. (Trans-Lux 52nd St., Lexington at 52nd, PL 3-2434; through April 4.)

Trio—Another batch of Somerset Maugham short stories on film, similar to "Quartet." The picture, an English one, has in its favor some topnotch acting by Jean Simmons, James Hayter, and Nigel Patrick. (Sutton, 3rd Ave. at 57th, PL 9-1411; through afternoon of April 2, last showing at 5.)

REVIVALS

The Fallen Idol (1949)—A small boy's efforts to prevent his best pal, a butler, from being charged with murder. An English picture, with Bobby Henrey, Ralph Richardson, and Michèle Morgan. (Greenwich, Greenwich Ave. at 12th, WA 9-3350; April 1-3.)

Horsefeathers (1932)—The Marx Brothers in an academic setting. (5th Ave. Playhouse, 5th Ave. at 12th, OR 5-9630; through April 3, tentative.)

The Informer (1935)—Dublin and the revolution. With Victor McLaglen. (Beverly, 3rd Ave. at 50th, EL 5-8790; through April 4, tentative.)

Monkey Business (1931)—The Marx Brothers again, this time on board a liner, at a racketeers' ball, in a barn—everywhere. (5th Ave. Playhouse, 5th Ave. at 12th, OR 5-9630; through April 3, tentative.)

Odd Man Out (1947)—James Mason as a fugitive hunted by all the cops in Belfast. An English film. (Terrace, 9th Ave. at 23rd, CH 2-9280; April 1-2.)

Salerno Beachhead (1946)—The war as the infantry fought it in Italy. With Dana Andrews. Formerly called "A Walk in the Sun." (Lexington, Lexington at 51st, PL 3-0336; Loew's 72nd St., 3rd Ave. at 72nd, BU 8-7222; Orpheum, 3rd Ave. at 86th, AT 9-4607; Sheridan, 7th Ave. at 12th, WA 9-2166; Loew's 83rd St., B'way at 83rd, TR 7-3190; and Olympia, B'way at 107th, AC 2-1019; April 2-3.)

The Spoilers (1942)—Marlene Dietrich, Randolph Scott, and John Wayne in Rex Beach's Alaska. (Gracie Square, 1st Ave. at 89th, SA 2-2478; March 31.)

The Third Man (1950)—A melodramatic tour of postwar Vienna on the heels of Joseph Cotten, Orson Welles, and Valli. (Greenwich, Greenwich Ave. at 12th, WA 9-3350; April 1-3.)

The Window (1949)—About a persistent young fibber who happens to witness a real murder and can't get anybody to believe him. With Bobby Driscoll and Arthur Kennedy. (8th St. Playhouse, 52 W. 8th, GR 7-7874; April 1-4.)

Museum of Modern Art Film Library—Through April 1, showings at 3: "The Big Parade" (1925), directed by King Vidor, with John Gilbert and Renée Adorée. . . . ¶ Starting April 2, showings at 3 and 5:30: "The Wind" (1928), with Lillian Gish. (A limited number of reservations are available, but only to those applying for them in person at the Museum, 11 W. 53rd, after noon on the day of the showing.)

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THE BROADWAY AREA

FILMS OF MORE THAN ROUTINE INTEREST APPEAR IN HEAVY TYPE AND ARE DESCRIBED IN THE SECTION ABOVE

Astor, B'way at 45th. (JU 6-2240)
FOURTEEN HOURS.

Bijou, 209 W. 45th. (CO 5-8215)
Through April 3: **CYRANO DE BERGERAC.**
From April 4, at 8:30: "Tales of Hoffmann," Moira Shearer, Leonide Massine. (Opening night is a benefit performance.)

Capitol, B'way at 51st. (JU 2-5060)
"Soldiers Three," Stewart Granger, Walter Pidgeon.

Criterion, B'way at 44th. (LU 2-1796)
"The Prince of Peace" (non-professional cast).

Globe, B'way at 46th. (JU 6-5555)
Through March 30: "No Orchids for Miss Blandish," Jack La Rue, Linden Travers.
From March 31: "A Yank in Korea," Lon McCallister.

Golden, 252 W. 45th. (CI 6-6740)
From April 4: **CYRANO DE BERGERAC.**

Little CinéMet, 6th Ave. at 39th. (LO 4-1141)
March 29: "The Red Shoes," revival, Moira Shearer, Leonide Massine; and "Intermezzo," revival, Ingrid Bergman, Leslie Howard.
From March 30: "Buried Alive" (in Italian); and "Where Is Zaza?" (in Italian).

Mayfair, 7th Ave. at 47th. (CI 5-9800)
"Gambling House," Victor Mature, Terry Moore.

Music Hall, 6th Ave. at 50th. (CI 6-4600)
"Royal Wedding," Fred Astaire, Jane Powell.

Paramount, B'way at 43rd. (LO 3-1100)
"The Lemon Drop Kid," Bob Hope, Marilyn Maxwell.

Rivoli, B'way at 49th. (CI 7-1633)
"Rawhide," Tyrone Power, Susan Hayward.

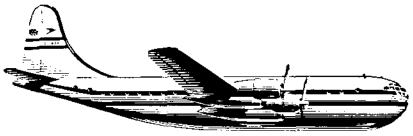
Roxy, 7th Ave. at 50th. (CI 7-6000)
"Bird of Paradise," Louis Jourdan, Debra Paget.

State, B'way at 45th. (LU 2-5070)
"Up Front," David Wayne, Tom Ewell.

Strand, B'way at 47th. (CI 7-5900)
"Lullaby of Broadway," Doris Day, Gene Nelson.

Victoria, B'way at 46th. (JU 6-0540)
BORN YESTERDAY.

World, 153 W. 49th. (CI 7-5747)
BITTER RICE (in Italian).



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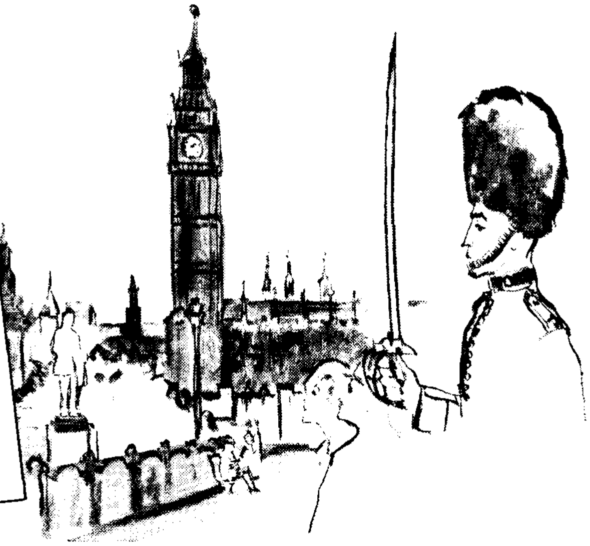

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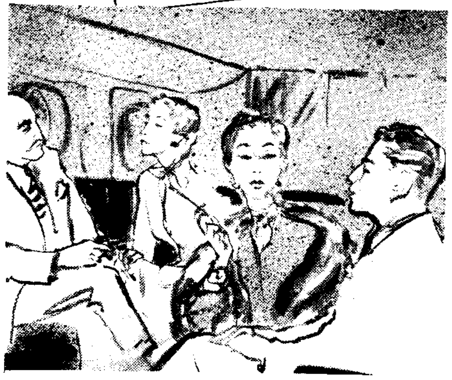

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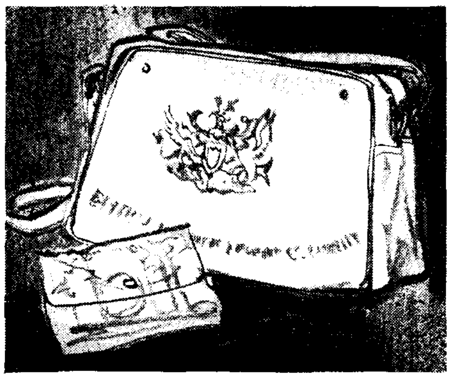

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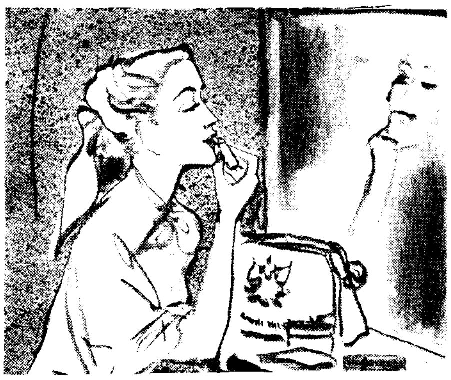

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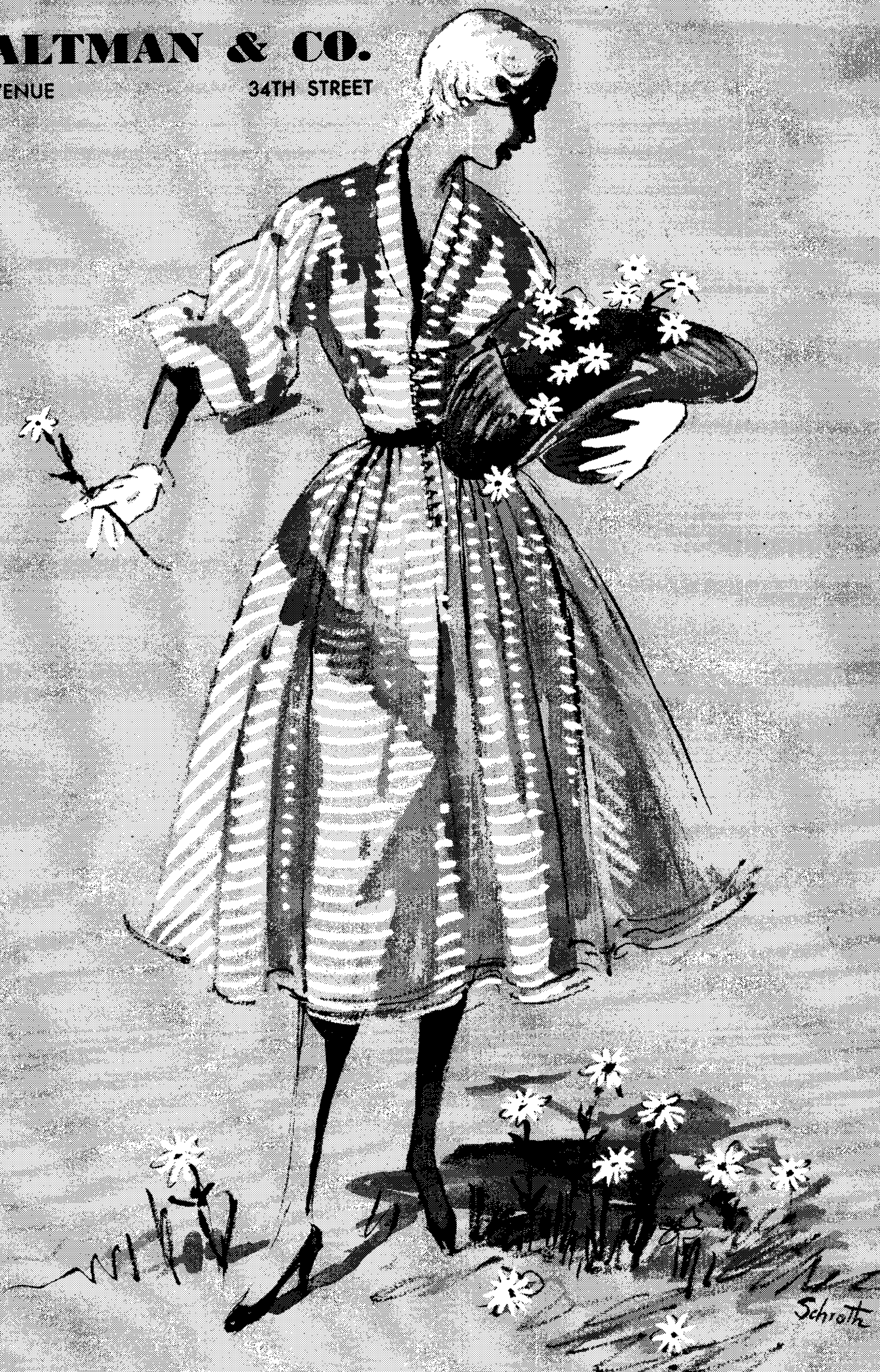

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THE NEW YORKER

THE TALK OF THE TOWN

Notes and Comment

THE influence of the crime investigation has been pervasive, particularly the influence of Senator Tobey's little accusatory lectures, which in retrospect seem to us a questionable form of fact-finding. Questionable or not, they set a pattern in the mind. We had occasion to call up a fellow at the U.N. the other morning while the hearing was in progress, to ask him about the *Prensa* business, and in the course of our talk he remarked, "The Subcommission on Freedom of Information is dormant." "Well, wake it up!" we were about to shout, and then remembered that we weren't a senator, and our friend wasn't a witness, and the fierce religious light of television wasn't falling upon our conversation.

THE murder of a newspaper is a lot like the murder of a person; it is apt to lead to further bloodshed in an attempt to destroy the evidence. Mr. Perón strangled *La Prensa* and was seen with the sash cord in his hand. All over the world, newspapers and magazines just happened to catch him in the act. So he is now taking the next step: he is knocking the witnesses over the head, in order to get *them* out of the way. Argentine customs authorities were instructed last week to seize certain foreign newspapers and periodicals, so the dictator might be spared the embarrassment of having the Argentine public read about his crime. Thus does murder breed murder.

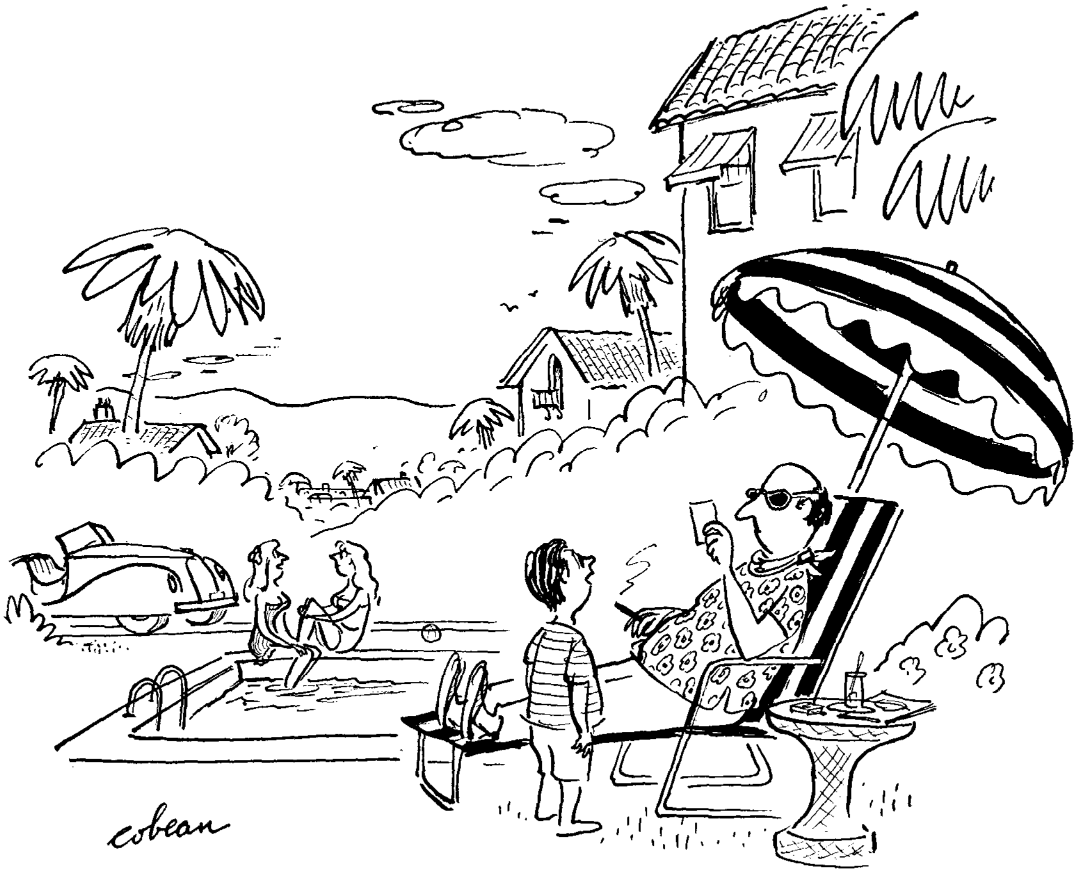
THE closing of *La Prensa* is reminiscent of other slayings, in the not distant past, when other dictators, now dead, were busy silencing the free press. We had to fight a war over it, and that, too, is memorable. Even the terminology has a familiar sound—the use of the word "light" for the word "darkness." Dictators always create a language of their own. Mr. Perón, appearing recently at a conference of twenty-one American republics, called for a program to make the Western Hemisphere "a beacon of peace in a world of darkness." We prefer Webster's Dictionary in these crises; pending restoration of *La Prensa*, we shall refer to Mr. Perón's country as Darkest Argentina, and we would like to see it thus named whenever it is mentioned in the American press (now banned by him), as a continuing protest against these abominable deeds.

THE *Prensa* affair stirs again the recurrent question: How can the United Nations shake off its impotency and show strength? The free world is rocked by the suppression of an independent newspaper and does not readily accept the explanation that it is a "domestic" matter. There is nothing domestic about the death of a newspaper. To kill off a newspaper is aggression. It is as menacing as to move an army across a border. If the Subcommission on Freedom of Information is dormant, then let the new Peace Observation Commission wake up and take *La Prensa* as its first assignment. What better observatory is there, if one is looking for evil stars, than a padlocked newspaper whose editor is being sought for arrest because he wrote a statement expressing his side of the case?

THE U.N. has on its books a declaration of human rights, but it has no machinery for regulating human conduct. It cannot demand that member nations perform the duties that underlie these rights, it cannot insist that member nations accept the responsibilities that would make the rights a reality. In short, it can watch *La Prensa* die and it can take notes, but it cannot bring the killer to account. The U.N., furthermore, does not impose any moral conditions of membership. The nations that were admitted in 1945, of which Darkest Argentina was one, were accepted by reason of their having been on the winning side in a world war—as silly a way of organizing a club as any we ever heard of. Right now, the U.N. weighs the advantage of having Russia at its conference table against the alternate advantage of having a set of basic principles on which members are agreed. It can't have both. But it won't have strength until it has principles—the first principle being a free press. The U.N. has behind it a strong world sentiment that seeks action in behalf of free principles. The time will come, soon or late, when this sentiment will dominate all other emotions and when the U.N. will decide to overhaul its charter and create a constitutional system of rights and duties, as a substitute for a mere working arrangement with Russia and her buddies. Then, if a nation wants to enjoy the pleasures and advantages of membership, it will have to fulfill the qualifications for membership. And the first of these shall be a free press, and no fooling.

Bolted On

A NEW wrinkle in crime, and one that the Kefauver Committee failed to get into, is the theft from Ford cars of those red, black, blue, and chromium escutcheons, bearing three heraldic lions gardant and the heroic motto "FORD," that are mounted, front and rear, on every 1950 and 1951 model. It appears that these shields, measuring about three by three inches, are highly fashionable in juvenile circles as articles of adornment, for wear on belts, ties, blue jeans, and the like. We



"Those 'C's stand for 'colossal.'"

• •

visited the Ford regional headquarters, at Park Avenue and Fifty-seventh Street, last Thursday and discussed the situation with Messrs. William Hersey and John Sattler, of Ford public relations, whom we found seated at the same desk, chins in hand—like Niobe, all tears. "Why do these things always happen to Ford?" Sattler asked rhetorically. "Back in '43, some wise guy started the story that Ford would give a new car to anybody who sent in a 1943 copper penny. That was the year the government didn't mint any copper pennies. Then, when the '49 model came out, a rumor swept the country that four Fords with experimental engines that made from fifty to sixty miles to the gallon had been shipped East from Dearborn, by mistake, and sold to four unidentified people. The Ford company was supposed to be fine-tooth-combing the whole Eastern seaboard, trying to locate the cars and get them back at any price. Those things were terrible nuisances. And now this!"

Upon inquiry, Hersey said that he believed the escutcheon to be an invented one, unrelated to the Ford family. "Henry Ford, Senior, once got interested in his ancestry, and on a trip to England tried to find the Ford coat of arms," he said. "But nothing came of it. The fact is, Mr. Ford's father came over from Ireland in 1847." The first Ford cars to bear the crest—it's really an escutcheon, but the Ford people prefer to call it a crest—appeared late in 1949. At that time, the crests had a plastic rim and were merely clipped on to the body of the car. "Knock it off with a glancing blow," Sattler said. "No wonder the kids started swiping them. The demand for crests began to exceed the obviously normal demand for replacements in the spring of 1950. In August, we changed the rim of the crest to metal and started bolting the crest on, and in this region we haven't had any trouble with these, but the ones we turned out earlier are still coming off the cars. There's no question about that."

"Talk to a dealer," Hersey said, handing us a telephone, and a moment later we were indeed talking to a dealer—Jerry Freeman, of the Ralph Horgan agency, on upper Broadway. "We're getting worried about replacements," Freeman told us. "Shortage of metals, you know. That, and damage to the cars. We've called on several schools and asked the teachers to spread word around that we'll be glad to sell the crests to children for less than cost—three dollars for a pair of them, instead of the usual six. We've had quite a few kids come in and buy them." Mr. Freeman hung up, and Sattler handed us another telephone and urged us to talk to Dearborn. A moment later, we were indeed talking to Dearborn. A Mr. Forrest out there told us that Ford has had to turn out an extra three hundred and twenty-two thousand crests to date, and is getting panicky because teen-agers in western regions are getting on to the fact that the bolted-on crests can be removed by unscrewing the nuts on the inside of the car hoods and baggage compartments. "We're advising owners to keep their doors and baggage compartments locked," Forrest said. "That way, kids won't be able to get at the nuts."

We said goodbye to the far-off Forrest, and Hersey took up the Ford man's burden. "Sattler and I got up some small lapel pins with the same design as the crests," he said, "and sent out word that we'd give them away, but we've only had twenty-seven requests for them so far. The kids want the real thing." "Ford has no intention of backing down on these crests," Sattler said. "The 1952 Fords will definitely have them, and they will be fastened on to stay—we hope. But we're up against a resourceful enemy. Some of these kids even steal the crests off Ford police cars." "Where we made a mistake, we made the crests too attractive," Hersey said. Sattler shook his head. "It's the guys over at General Motors I keep worrying about," he said. "I know what they're thinking, but they're wrong. We didn't have a thing to do with it."

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Southern Intelligence: There's a women's club in Shreveport, Louisiana, called the Opti-Mrs. Club.

Jouvet

Louis Jouvet, the celebrated French actor, who, with nine other members of his Théâtre de l'Athénée company, is in the midst of a three-week run of Molière's "L'Ecole des Femmes" here, was the guest of honor at a cocktail party given last week by René de Messières, the Cultural Counsellor to the French Embassy, and Mme. de Messières at their cultural counsellate, the old Charles E. Mitchell house on upper Fifth Avenue, and there, by a herculean effort, we succeeded in detaching him from a group of rapid-talking

French ladies and such indigenes as Reginald T. Townsend, James Hazen Hyde, and Henry Morgenthau III long enough to go briefly into his life and times. He was born in Brittany in 1887, is the grandfather of four, looks a vigorous forty-five, and is the son of a public-building, bridge, road, and railway engineer whose work took him, and his family, all over France. The senior Jouvet died in Lyon, when Louis was fifteen, and the son, whose mother's family had run to doctors and druggists, was asked by an uncle which he would rather be, a doctor or a druggist. "*Un pharmacien*," he said, and so, after finishing school in Lyon, he became an apprentice in his uncle's drugstore in Rethel. "It was awful," he told us. "I left after a year, when I was seventeen, and went to Paris, where I worked in another drugstore, in the suburb of Noisy-le-Sec. I also took evening courses in pharmaceutics at the Université de Paris. I got fifty francs a month, and room and board in the store—that is, the house containing the store. That was awful, too, but on my day off I could go to the theatre. I loved the theatre." Jouvet got a druggist's diploma at the Université, spent two or three years working in hospitals and drugstores, and then, in 1909, when he was twenty-two, began acting in summer theatres. Two years later, he gave up the drug business to play stock the year round. Mostly he appeared in such old-fashioned melodramas as "The Count of Monte Cristo" and "The Wandering Jew." "*C'est pas mal, ce que tu fais*," an old fellow-trouper told him one day. "You'll go to Paris sometime." In 1913, he did, as stage manager of and actor in the Théâtre du Vieux-Colombier, a company formed by Jacques Copeau, which put on plays by André Gide and other avant-garde writers. During the first war, he served with the French Medical Corps, was invalided out in 1917, and was then sent to New York by the French government with a Vieux-Colombier detachment of twenty to put on repertory. "We fixed up the Garrick Theatre, on West Thirty-fifth Street, near Keen's Chop House," he said, "made our début with Molière, enjoyed a *succès d'estime*, and spent the summer on Otto Kahn's place near Morristown, as his guests. The next fall and winter, we played twenty-five weeks in Manhattan, a different play every week—everything from the seventeenth century to Bernstein. We used to eat at Keen's."

This is Jouvet's first American visit since then. In 1922, he left the Vieux-Colombier for another company, the Comédie des Champs-Elysées, in which he functioned as director and leading actor until 1934, when he joined the Athénée. In this, he heads a group of sixty—actors, designers, electricians, etc.—all of whom call him *Patron*. After the fall of France, he managed to get about half his company to Brazil, along with thirty-five tons of scenery and costumes. A four-year odyssey followed, during which he and his troupe put on twenty different plays in thirteen different countries. "Their governments helped us," he said. "They gave us theatres and money. Our scenic drawings had been smuggled out of Paris, so when we didn't have the necessary scenery we were able to build it." Jouvet returned to Paris in 1945 and reëstablished his company there. "I'd be glad to lend my theatre to an American company," he said. "I hope we can effect exchanges. My experience here shows it can be done. American audiences don't always laugh at the right places in 'L'Ecole des Femmes,' for they don't all understand French, but our reception has been warmhearted and heart-warming. I agree with what Giraudoux once wrote me about New York—'It's like a garden whose gardener has gone away; the cabbages have grown too high.' " Jouvet took a walk around town the other afternoon and went by Keen's. He gazed at it nostalgically but didn't go in.

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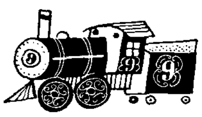
SIGN in a West Twenty-third Street barbershop: "We Do Exceptionally First-Class Haircutting."

Full of Tricks

FOR a couple of months now, Joseph Taddei, the chef of the Vanderbilt Hotel, has been giving culinary lessons to small groups of cooks from the Army post at Fort Totten, Long Island. The cooks drive over once a week and spend two hours in the Vanderbilt kitchen learning Mr. Taddei's way of making goulash, cooking roasts, steeping rice, arranging cold cuts for eye appeal, and so on. The course was the idea of Colonel George W. Weego, food supervisor for the First Army, and was set up through the good offices of Thomas J. Kelley, manager of the Vanderbilt. Through the good offices of both these gentlemen, we were enabled to spend an enlightening, if muggy, half hour in the Vanderbilt kitchen a few days ago, where we picked up one or two culinary tips ourself, along with some information about the Army's feeding problems. Led by the Colonel and Mr. Kelley, we wove our way among batteries of stoves, refrigerators, tables, and busy kitchen help to a point where five men in O.D.s, four of whom wore white aprons over them, were clustered about Mr. Taddei, a placid man dressed all in white, who was standing before a stove on which sat a big square metal pot containing chunks of meat floating in bubbling liquid. Mr. Kelley introduced the man without an apron as Captain Hapeman, food supervisor of the 80th AAA Group. The latter, in turn, introduced the others as Corporals Craven, DeShazo, and O'Neill, and Pfc. Rachal, all of them cooks.

Producing a large ladle, Mr. Taddei delicately skimmed a spoonful of liquid from the top of the pot, let the cooks examine it, and flung it into a can beside the stove. "Showing them how to skim grease off the top of goulash," Mr. Taddei explained to us. "It keeps coming to the surface, and when you've got it all removed, you've got something very tasty. Pretty soon you can tell if you got grease or gravy. When you got gravy, you stop." Mr. Kelley told us that Mr. Taddei was born in Parma, Italy, and has been with the hotel for thirty-two years. "His beef goulash is famous," Mr. Kelley said. "There's a Dutchman who comes here every Tuesday from Philly just to eat it." Corporal Craven mentioned a few things the Army cooks had been taught earlier—how to blanch (boil) the mutton taste out of mutton, for instance, and how to cook bacon so it won't shrivel up. "Joseph is full of tricks," Mr. Kelley observed. The trick with bacon, we learned, is to slice it thin, lay it flat in a pan, and cook a few pieces at a time, slowly. "Thanks to Mr. Taddei," Colonel Weego said to us, "we'll be able to serve the troops mutton once again. It's always had a very low acceptance value, because it *tasted* like mutton. Mr. Taddei's recipe has now gone to Washington, and it will soon appear in the *Master Menu*, the monthly supply bulletin put out by the Army and the Air Force."



Chef Taddei led the party to one of the iceboxes on the other side of the room, and extracted from it some slices of chicken and tongue and some lettuce leaves, and Corporal DeShazo undertook to arrange these invitingly on a large plate. "You eat with your eyes as well as with your mouth," Captain Hapeman said. The Corporal called for some slices of tomato. "On the nomenclatural side," Captain Hapeman advised us, "we've changed 'mess hall' to 'dining hall' and 'mess sergeant' to 'mess steward.' Psychology." Colonel Weego said that in the past, one of the Army's biggest food headaches was the soldiers' pre-service eating habits. "Up at Fort Devens," he said, "there are a couple of companies of Southern boys who'd rather eat grits than potatoes. The way it was in the old days, they'd have had to down the potatoes and it would have hurt their morale. Now we've set up a couple of dining halls where, by golly, they *get* grits. Works out fine." "In the old days," Captain Hapeman said, "there was a saying you could tell the day of the week by what you had for the noon meal. No more. They're all mixed up." "Olives and coleslaw!" Corporal DeShazo called. "Colonel Weego is responsible for the Army's now serving ice cream in a cardboard cup instead of in loose chunks," Mr. Kelley said. "That way," the Colonel explained, "it's partly insulated against heat from a hot tray, and if you're in the field, eating from a mess kit, the ice cream doesn't get in your mashed potatoes. You appreciate that."

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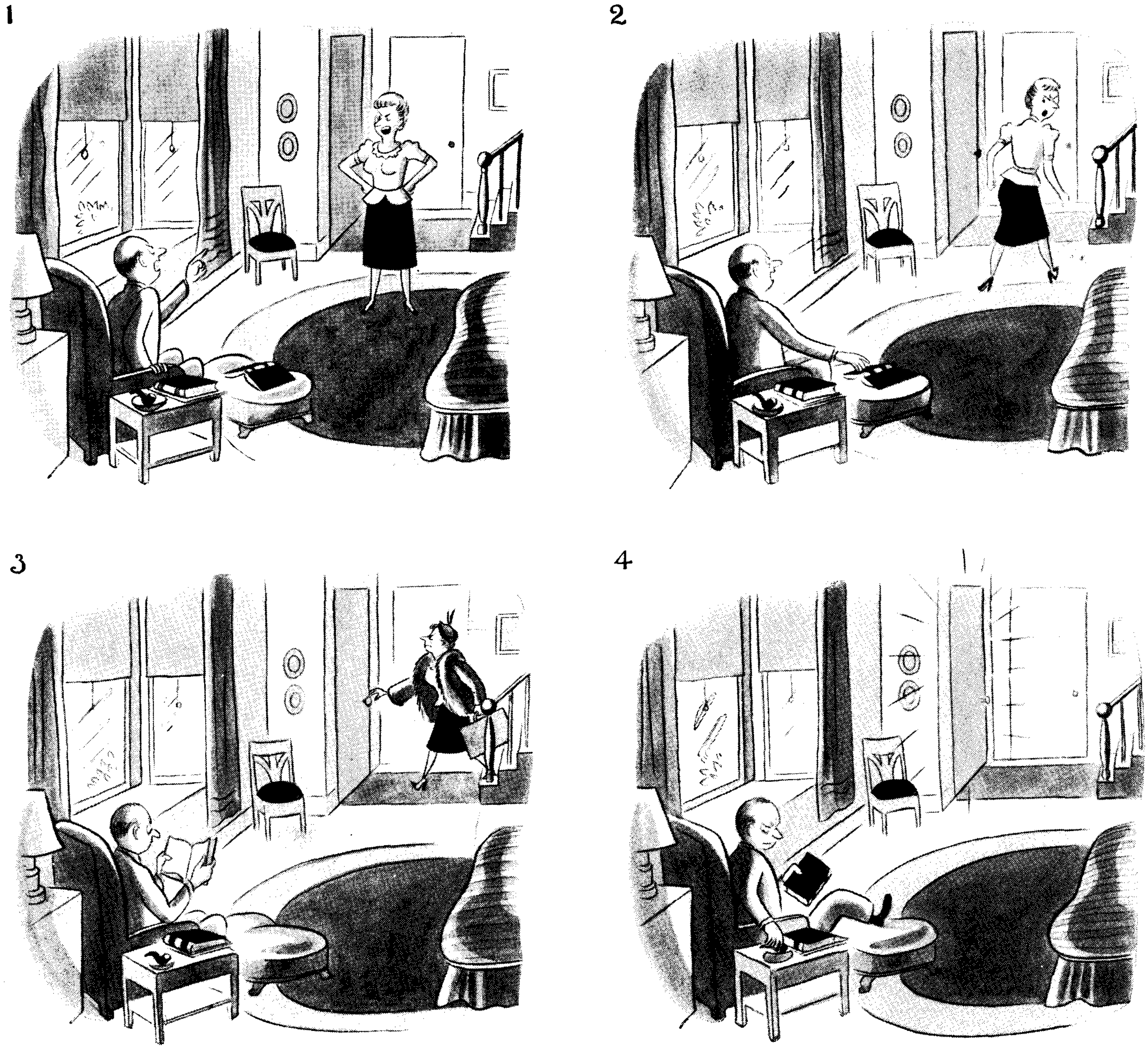
OBSERVATION overheard in a midtown late spot: "Business must be good with him. He's always drunk."

One Blown Fuse

THE local Senate Crime Investigating Committee hearings, which concluded last week, proved unquestionably to be television's headiest triumph to date, with an estimated audience of twenty million viewers clustered around screens in homes, bars, offices, factories, schools, and hospitals, and some of the credit should go to an eight-man crew of technicians from WPIX, the station that had sole charge of televising the proceedings. Despite the handicaps involved in televising in a courtroom, amid a sea of reporters and still and newsreel cameramen, with committeemen, witnesses, investigators, and court attachés constantly moving in and out of range, shoving microphones back and forth, and in general behaving in a way calculated to drive television technicians crazy, the WPIX crew managed to televise the eight days of hearings with scarcely a hitch. The longest unintentional interruption lasted only thirty seconds, and it was caused by some newsreel cameramen who turned on too many lights too fast and blew a fuse. About fifty television stations between here and Omaha, the present western terminus of the transcontinental coaxial



cable, carried the hearings, and excellent viewing was reported all over. The images thus widely diffused were picked up by two cameras in the courtroom and dispatched from a temporary control room set up in a small, hot, steel-walled detention cell next door to it.

A couple of hours after the hearings ended, we had a talk with Charles A. Voso, a technical director at WPIX, who was in charge of the crew at the hearings and spent most of the week darting between courtroom and cell. Voso has been in television since 1939, and now, at forty-two, is something of a grand old man in the industry. He is a dark, stocky, intense fellow, and at the time of our talk he was looking tired but pleased. He told us that the last item of TV equipment had just been taken from the courthouse, loaded onto a truck, and returned to WPIX headquarters, in the News Building. "Tomorrow, I'll go back to work in the studio," he said. "We'll be shooting a show called 'Leave It to Poppa.' It'll be quite a letdown after Kefauver, Costello, and the rest of the gang."

Voso and his staff had to get to the courtroom every morning around eight. The image orthicon, the part of the TV camera that actually takes the picture, has to be warmed up for at least forty-five minutes before it's used; otherwise, what it scans is burned into the surface of the tube and can't be eradicated for a long time. Voso kept a spare camera, in the control room, warmed up all the time, just in case. The two working cameras were mounted on platforms ten feet high, but, at that, a go-getting girl photographer for *Life* kept hopping up and showing the back of her pretty head to most of eastern North America. The cameras were spotted about twenty feet from the judges' bench, on which the Committee and its counsel sat, and about the same distance from the witnesses' table. For closeups, telephoto lenses brought faces up to within a seeming distance of four or five feet. The cameras were at an angle to the Committee and head on to the witnesses. "This worked out fine from a dramatic point of view," Voso said. "Our angle shots of Halley showed him always crouching forward, a real bulldog pose."

Television cameras no longer require an exceptional amount of light, Voso told us, and the powerful illumination in the courtroom was for the benefit of the newsreel men. Once or twice, when the newsreel lights were off, the WPIX cameramen got fine pictures with ordinary courtroom light. WPIX was responsible for the broadcast on radio as well as on TV, and for the public-address system inside the courtroom. Voso said that in respect to sound, Erickson, being extremely soft-spoken, gave the most trouble among the witnesses and Kefauver gave the most among Committee members. "Costello was, of course, the most troublesome in respect to the cameras," Voso said, "but he was also the most interesting. Those shots of his hands were a lucky accident. When we weren't allowed to show him, we thought we'd show the mike he was talking into, and there were his hands. Then the Committee asked us not to show his hands. The next day, when Costello was testifying, we got a marvellous shot of his shadow on the wall. I think he outsmarted himself refusing to let us shoot him while he testified. He might have got some sympathy if the public could have looked at him."

In the control room throughout the hearings were a couple of audio men, controlling the sound; a couple of video men, controlling the images; and a program director, calling the selection of shots. Both cameras went on taking pictures constantly. The program director ordered switches from one to the other by singing out, "Take one!" or "Take two!" The images went by coaxial cable to the twenty-eighth floor of the courthouse, from there by microwave—i.e., air—to the Empire State Building, from there by cable to the News Building and the Telephone Company's radio headquarters, on Canal Street, and from there by either cable or microwave to the stations served.

"When we started in on this job, we thought it was just another one of those public-service assignments," Voso said. "WPIX asked the Committee for permission to televise the hearings, and they arranged for us to do the job for everybody. We didn't expect much of a response. Neither did the Committee. It was uncanny the way it caught on."

Service

Schoolgirl who lives on Long Island and attends school in New York called up her mother last Tuesday noon and said she felt as if she were coming down with the flu. Advised to start home right away, she hailed a cab in front of the school and directed the driver to Pennsylvania Station. "Playing hooky?" he asked. She told him about the flu. He drew up to the curb, produced a blanket and pillow from the front seat, and wrapped her up. "Just had it myself," he said. "I know how you feel."

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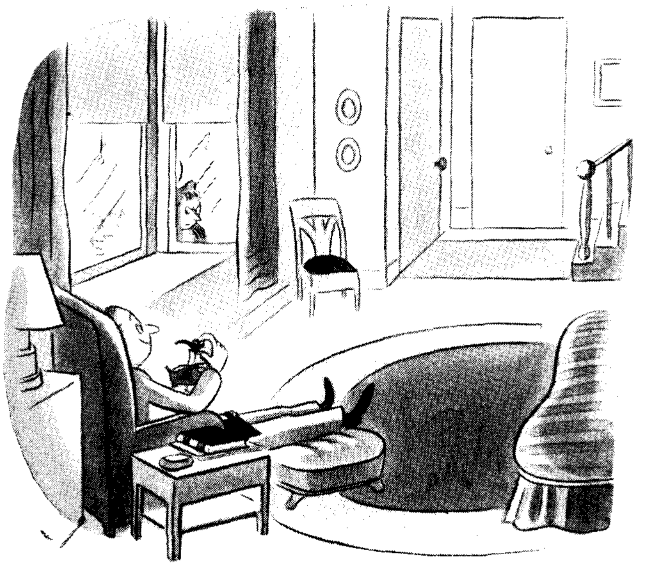

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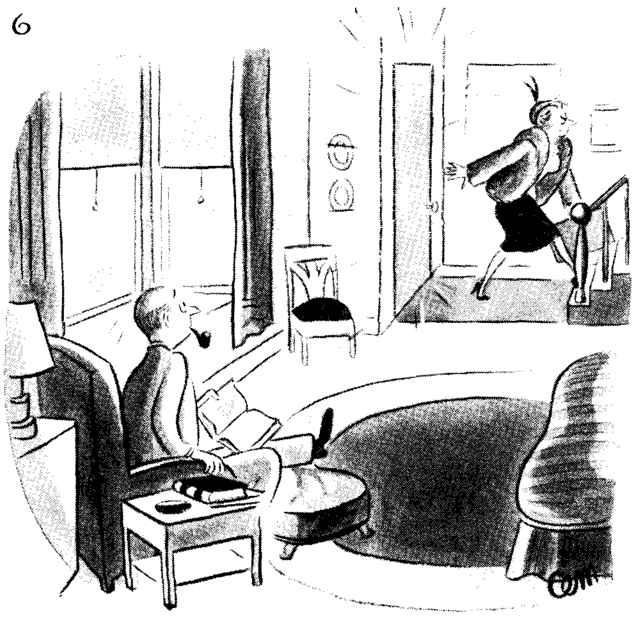


CHEWIES THE GOAT BUT FLICKS NEED HYPO

IT appears to be more than a rumor that *Variety*, that reliable and colorful barometer of show business, may shortly change its name. According to my source (a papaya-juice vender on West Forty-sixth Street, whose identity I cannot disclose for fear of reprisals), the editors plan, by the simple expedient of altering three letters, to rechristen their paper *Anxiety*, a title more suited to its contents these days. This decision, between ourselves, comes as no surprise to me. Every Wednesday of late, skimming through *Variety's* picture grosses and film chatter, I have run into palpitations and anguish not normally aired outside the *American Journal of Orthopsychiatry*. To judge from these bedside reports, the movie business is clearly *in extremis;* bats and mice are daily replacing audiences in theatres across the land, cobwebs are forming on the ushers, and exhibitors, hysterically accusing television, politics, substandard product, and even sunspots, have succumbed to panic. The most Talmudic reasons have been adduced to explain the decline in the box office, and it was inevitable that before long some Hawkshaw would try to pin the rap on that old whipping boy, the human stomach.

By the human stomach, of course, I refer, in a broad, generic sense, to the goodies—the caramel popcorn, molasses chews, coconut bars, and similar delicacies—sold in cinema lobbies. The suspicion has been gaining ground among showmen, says *Variety*, that "the annoyance of other customers' munch-crunch and the emphasis some houses are putting on selling of sweets" underlie the crisis. It quotes in support a conversation overheard by a member of the Allied Theatre Owners of Indiana. Four women sitting at the table next to him in a restaurant, he reported, "all agreed with one of the ladies, who said very emphatically that her family never attended the ——— theatre any more because they were tired of all the efforts made there to sell concessions, all the people in the audience munching during the show, and, most of all, having to sit through advertising trailers telling about how delicious were the concession-stand wares. Is it possible that theatre-lobby merchandising can be a factor why people are staying away from the movies, and is it worth a little restudy?"

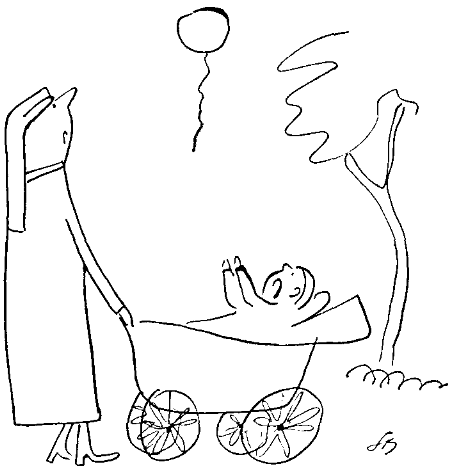
Restudy, if I may make so bold, is not only indicated here; it is downright mandatory. The plain truth is that the Allied Theatre Owners of Indiana, and exhibitors generally, are staggering under a tremendous burden of mistaken, self-imposed guilt. As their patrons dwindle, keening about the pressures exerted on them to purchase sweets, the poor simps neurotically look inward for the reason instead of westward. The real culprit, I submit, is Hollywood itself. The industry has been locked too long in its ivory tower, too long preoccupied with artistic considerations better left to highbrows like Johnny Ruskin or Walt Pater. What the situation cries out for is pictures that will tell a gripping story and at the same time subtly sell the eatables in the lounge. With the aid of a small hand loom, I have woven a few necessary elements into an action-packed, down-to-earth yarn that may serve as a model, appealing to the gustatory as well as the visual instinct. It may not wheedle customers into the show shop, but at least it will act as a tourniquet.

WE fade in on the porte-cochère of a mansion ablaze with lights, and, as sleek motors laden with impeccably groomed men of aristocratic visage and women garbed in the *dernier cri* from Paris disgorge their human freight, establish that this is the home of Monica, Lady Beltravers, arbiter of Bombay society. Monica, an Irene Dunne-type chatelaine that is the very essence of the chicly poised British gentlewoman, loiters on the stoop greeting her guests. "Sir Cyprian Chetwynd—what a surprise!" she exclaims cordially to one imperious, hawk-nosed oldster as he alights from his equipage. "I certainly never expected the Home Secretary himself at my ball, crowning event of the social season albeit it is!" To another arrival, a swarthy potentate in whose turban glows a single magnificent ruby, she observes laughingly, "Well, Hara Singh, I guess we will not be having to press our crystal chandelier into service, now that the Star of Assam is shedding its beam on the courtly throng!" From hints like the foregoing, it is blueprinted that Her Ladyship's annual rout is the smartest affair in the Punjab, and that even the Viceroy would count himself lucky to get the nod from her. Monica, the cynosure of all eyes, wears on her queenly head the famous Beltravers tiara, and as we truck indoors with her through the assemblage, we garner numerous startled reactions. (The reactions are startled not because she is wearing the tiara on her head, where it should be, but because of its splendor.) Everybody thinks she is goofy to display so costly a bauble, for is it not an open secret that Tony Pickering, the most elusive international-society jewel thief in the Empire, is somewhere in the area, pledged to steal it from under the fair owner's nose? Monica, notwithstanding, snaps her pretty fingers at the ravens who croak disaster, graciously urging them to sample the lavish feed arrayed on the sideboard—turkey, tongue in aspic, slaw, and suchlike viands. And right here, without slackening pace, is an ideal spot to slip in an offbeat allusion to the comestibles available to moviegoers in the lobby.

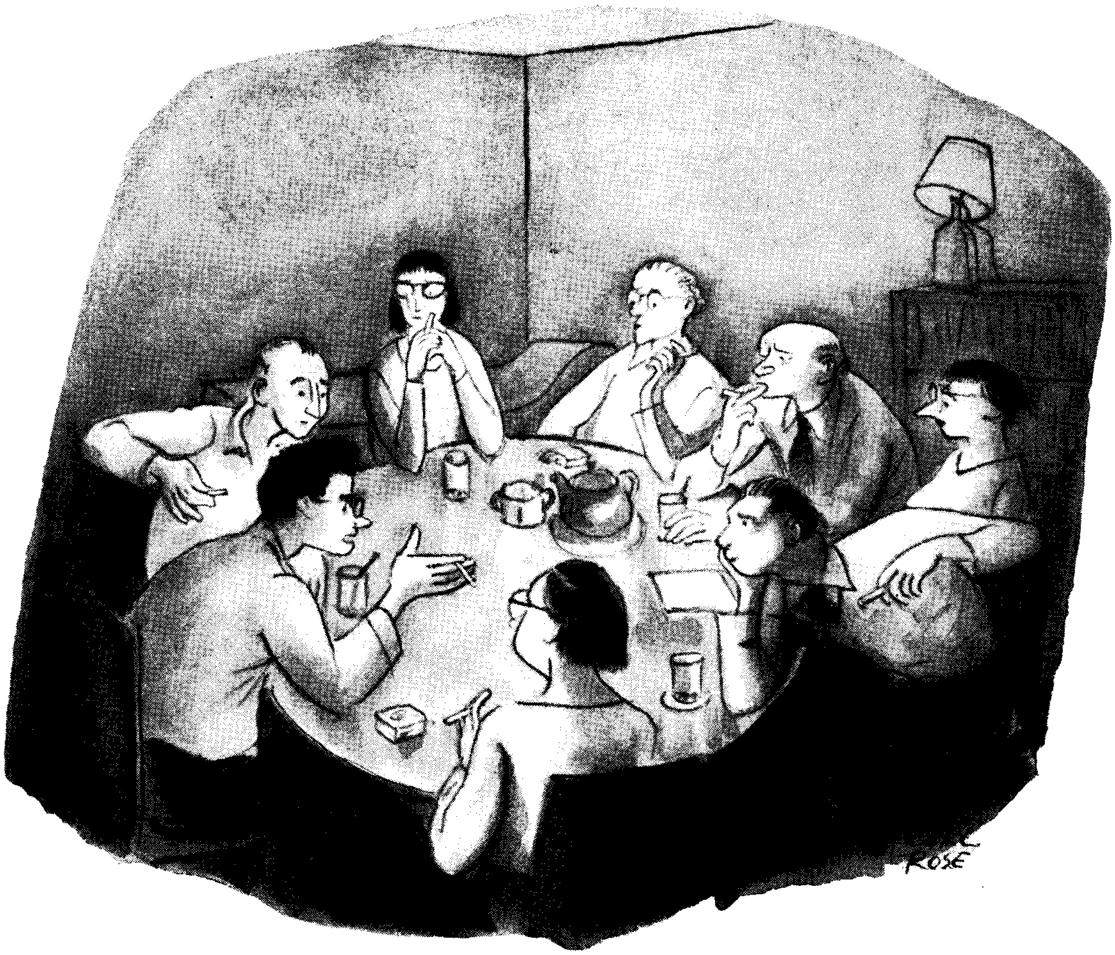
"Bless me, Monica, what a toothsome collation," remarks one of the dowagers, enviously scanning it through her lorgnette.

"Thanks, Baroness," Lady Beltravers replies. "And, speaking of matters edible, the fans watching this need not fall prey to the green-eyed monster, for adjacent to their chairs they will lamp a pleasing selection of mint drops, chocolate creams, and candied apples to beguile themselves stomachwise." Needless to say, I am not writing dialogue, just spitballing to indicate how smoothly the pitch blends in with the action.

To pick up our story thread: Unsuspected by the merrymakers, Tony Pickering, a debonair figure in flawless tails (Randolph Scott), saunters nonchalantly amid the waltzing couples. The Beltravers tiara is almost within his grasp. Suddenly, he comes face to face with Sandra Thrale (Greer Garson), the second-most-elusive society jewel thief in the Empire. A sardonic situation, fraught with boffs—two devil-may-care tricksters bent on the same perilous mission. Who will emerge victor? The lovers (for so they soon prove to be, despite their mutual antagonism) strike a bargain, snatch the



prize in some ingenious fashion as yet to be devised, and show their pursuers a clean pair of heels. Sprinkled through the chase I see a couple of knockabout Hindu comics, on the order of Karl Dane and George K. Arthur, whose uproarious antics constantly land them in hot water and reap a rich harvest of laffs. This concludes the first sequence, a high-octane mixture of suspense, comedy, and romance guaranteed to keep people on the edge of their seats but still not allow them full mobility.



"Here's another question that keeps coming up in my cell group. In case the warmongers provoke our leaders into defensive counter-action, are Party members in densely populated areas to receive any advance warning?"

SIDI-BEL-ABBÈS, headquarters of the French Foreign Legion. Sand . . . heat . . . primitive passions fanned into flame by a word, a look. Into this port of nameless men drifts the flotsam of many races, asking only one thing—to forget. And with it, seeking salvation under the remorseless African sun, has come Tony Pickering. He and Sandra, after a senseless quarrel in Rome, during which she cast the tiara into the Tiber in a fit of pique, have broken. We iris down on him idling through the bazaars shortly before his regiment leaves for El Kébir, a remote desert outpost. A vivid background and a perfect opportunity to insinuate a timely message to the savages out front.

"Look, *mon capitaine*," a merchant whines, plucking at Tony's sleeve. "Splendid fresh figs, succulent as a Bedouin maid."

"Yes, and just as tricky," comments Pickering acidly. "That's where folks buying peanuts in their neighborhood flicks have the jump on us creatures of the silver screen. Those tasty goobers, warranted bacteria-free, speed directly from the roaster into sanitized glassine bags and thence to grateful palates. Boy, I could eat a slew of them." In other words, rather than hit the patrons over the head with a crass commercial, we actually use it to further the narrative. From now on, every man, woman, and child in the building is psychologically primed to rush out and give his taste buds a treat, except that the action is moving so fast he dassn't tear himself away.

We now deliver a surprise twist, a terrific sock that nobody but a clairvoyant could anticipate. In the ordinary scenario, the next scene would portray El Kébir beleaguered by tribesmen; Tony and brutal Sergeant Lepic (Brod Crawford), the only survivors in the fort, have posted their dead comrades on the parapet with rifles in their hands to hoodwink the attackers when a relief column led by Sandra (who has followed her swain unbeknownst to Algeria) raises the siege. Instead of this tepid dénouement, which would merely generate yawns, we dissolve to a hunting lodge in the Canadian Rockies, where Sandra's wealthy father (Charles Coburn) has taken her to cure her infatuation for Tony. Since their spat in Rome, the girl has paid her debt to society and become a brilliant woman psychiatrist, a leader in her profession. Yet—irony of ironies—she, who brings happiness to others, is denied it herself, for Cupid has laid waste her heart. She cannot decide between Tony, now a world-famed construction engineer, and Jim Stafford (John Wayne), New York's most outstanding criminal lawyer. As father and daughter breakfast in their mountain retreat, unaware that a consuming forest fire rages toward them, the kindly old millionaire is concerned anent her birdlike appetite.

"You haven't eaten a crumb, sweet," Thrale chides her. "Try one of these speckled beauties which I captured it with rod and reel outside our door this morning."

"They *are* scrumptious, Daddy," she makes wistful reply, "but you'll never know bliss till you tackle Frosticles, the jet-powered ice-cream sensation." Thrale's curiosity is piqued, as anyone's would be, and he inquires where the confection may be obtained, whereupon Sandra enlightens him. The scene can be made doubly effective by dispatching candy-butchers down the aisle on cue, shouting "Frosticles!" They should, however, be cautioned against shouting so loud that the audience loses the thread. Once that happens, the jig is up.

THE framework of the story being elastic, we now have two possibilities to milk for a climax. In one, Tony and Jim, who have renounced their careers to be near Sandra and are loggers in a lumber camp close by, fight a sensational watery duel for her hand with peaveys. The flames soon bring them to their senses and, good-naturedly laying aside their rivalry, they race to save the trapped pair. But they arrive too late. Since this line is a little on the defeatist side, it might be better to develop the other, a device that gives the plot a neat switch. We lap-dissolve to a primitive raft becalmed in the South Pacific and plant that Tony, Jim, and four Norwegian buddies have all but given up hope for the success of their expedition. Tony has staked his reputation as a world-famous anthologist to prove that certain old-time Peruvians migrated to Tahiti on a raft made of balsam logs. The gallant sextet's provisions have run short, and in his delirium each man dreams longingly of his favorite dish on terra firma. If only he could feel the icy trickle of a cola drink between his parched lips, muses Tony, or nibble the delectable taffy that even the humblest filmgoer has at his beck and call. The various dainties pass in review in balloons over his head, to hammer the point home to the most obtuse. And then we belt into a sizzling washup. A typhoon strikes the frail craft, the seafarers are drenched to the bone, and one of the Norwegians is revealed to be Sandra, who has renounced her psychiatric career to be near Tony. As they joyfully nestle in each other's arms, the cry of "Polynesia ho!" echoes from the lookout. Tony's scientific thesis is vindicated, Jim sportingly acknowledges him the better man, and we squeeze on a tag wherein the couple sails homeward to the strains of "Aloha Oe." By then, the projectionist can breeze right into "Coming Attractions," for the patrons will be streaking toward the lobby to gorge themselves or apply for refunds, as the case may be.

WELL, there it is—no "Intolerance" or "Gone with the Wind," I grant you, but a nice, sound program film that'll hold up its end on any double bill and yield a good many mandolin picks after the run is finished. I've even written a score for it, containing half a dozen songs of "Hit Parade" calibre, and if Hammerstein's fee is excessive, I'll throw in a hatful of lyrics for good measure. The main thing is to release it pronto and get rid of all that glucose in the lobby before the mice get at it. You don't want sagebrush growing in your bathtub, do you, Mr. Selznick?

—S. J. PERELMAN

TEXT FOR TODAY

(A CHEERFUL POEM WRITTEN UPON READING IN THE "TIMES" THAT DR. ROBERT CUSHMAN MURPHY, OF THE MUSEUM OF NATURAL HISTORY, HAS DISCOVERED ON BERMUDA SEVERAL SPECIMENS OF THE CAHOW, A BIRD BELIEVED EXTINCT SINCE 1620.)

Amid the dark that rims us now,
  Beset by news we cannot cherish,
Let us consider the cahow*—
  That petrel which refused to perish,
In spite of gossip it had gone
With dodo and with mastodon.

Three hundred years ago or more,
  It built its nest, it spent its slumbers,
At ease upon Bermuda's shore
  In innocent, prolific numbers,
A creature of the coral reef,
Credulous, gentle, and naïf.

But then the hungry settlers came
  To find those pastures stern for plowing.
The bird was edible and tame,
  So everybody went cahowing,
Till by and by, beside the water,
There were no more cahows to slaughter.

"Alas!" cried all the scientists,
  "Alas, career so brief and checkered!"
They crossed "Cahow" from off the lists
  And wrote "Extinct" upon the record.
And man could boast another feat
Of rendering nature obsolete.

But all the while, with stealth and skill
  (Necessity become its motto),
The shrewd cahow was nesting still
  On lonely rock, in cave and grotto;
Invincibly, and by some plan,
Three hundred years outwitting man.

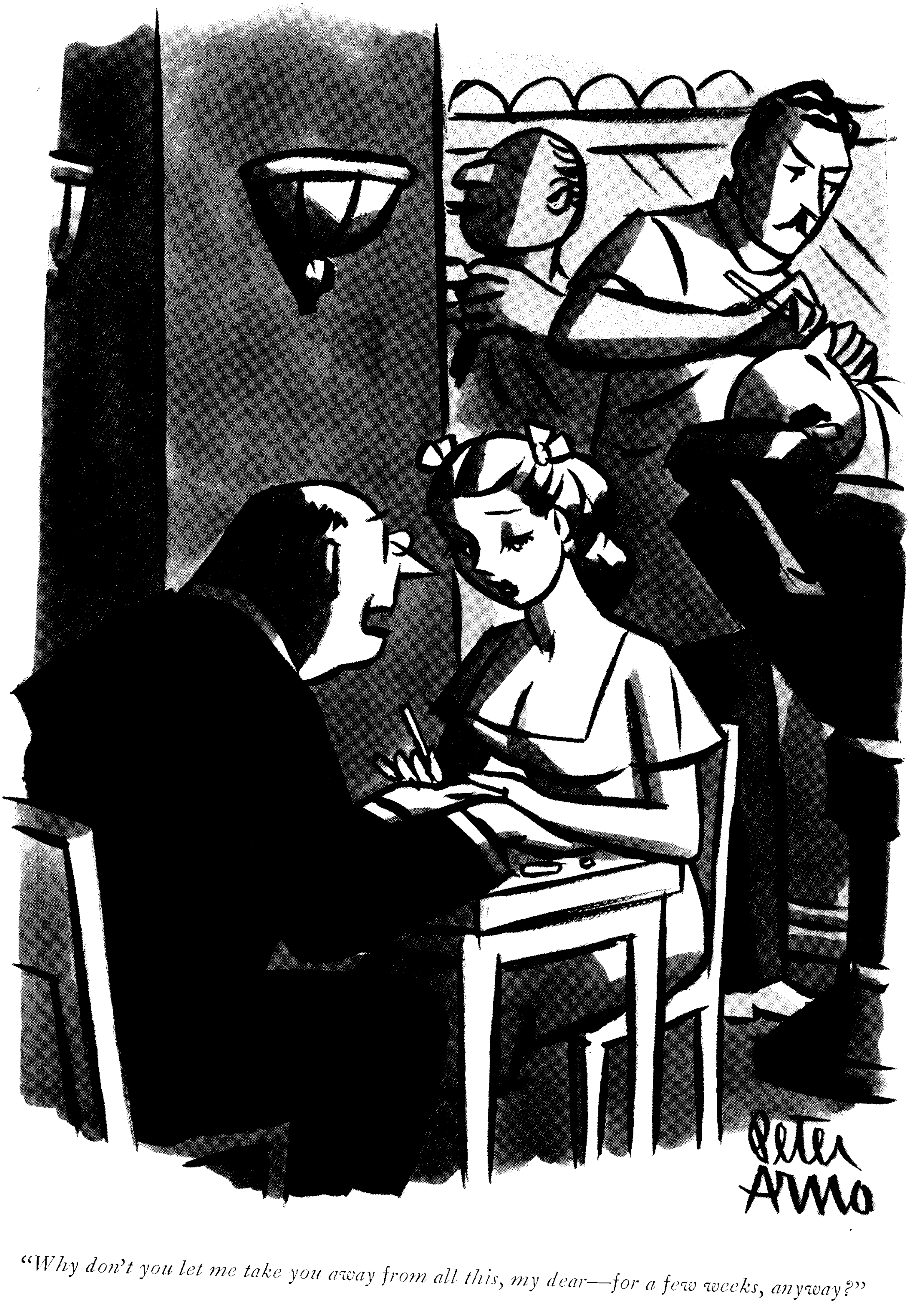
O brave cahow, so stubborn-linked
  To your own island, palmed and surfy!
I'm happy you are not extinct,
  But got espied by Dr. Murphy.
You lend me hope, you give me joy,
Whom Total Man could not destroy.

You give me joy, you lend me hope
  (At any rate, what hope is bred on),
For surely if a bird can cope
  So cunningly with Armageddon,
And, snug in unimagined dens,
  Wait out its season for returning,
Why, so can Homo sapiens
  Tomorrow when the planet's burning—
Can flee, root, cower, scrabble, strive,
And rear its progeny. And survive.

Amid our ills that seem incurable,
Cahow, you make me feel more durable.

—PHYLLIS MCGINLEY

*The New York *Times* implies the way how
Properly to pronounce it's "Ca′-how,"
While Webster gives a choice of two:
"Ca′-how" comes following "ca-hoo′."
But Dr. Murphy's on the shelf—
Says bird will cry the name itself
At nesting time, which is not now;
Might cry "ca′-how," "ca-how′," or "c'ow."
Till autumn brings the final test,
I'll say "ca-how′." It rhymes the best.



"Why don't you let me take you away from all this, my dear—for a few weeks, anyway?"

TWO LADIES IN RETIREMENT

SOME Nashville wit had once said, “When I look at Miss Betty Pettigru, I'm reminded of an old, old baby.” Others thought she looked more like the Home-Run King himself. She was a short, plump woman, not fat but with an individual plumpness to all her limbs and to her torso, her breasts, her hands, and even to the features on her moon-shaped face. She was a lady well known in Nashville, during a period of twenty-five years, for her Sunday-night parties and for her active role in the club life of the city. Miss Betty's face and figure and her parties and her active role seemed so much a part of Nashville that hardly anyone could believe it when, in the spring of 1926, word finally got around that she was definitely going to move away and go to live in St. Louis.

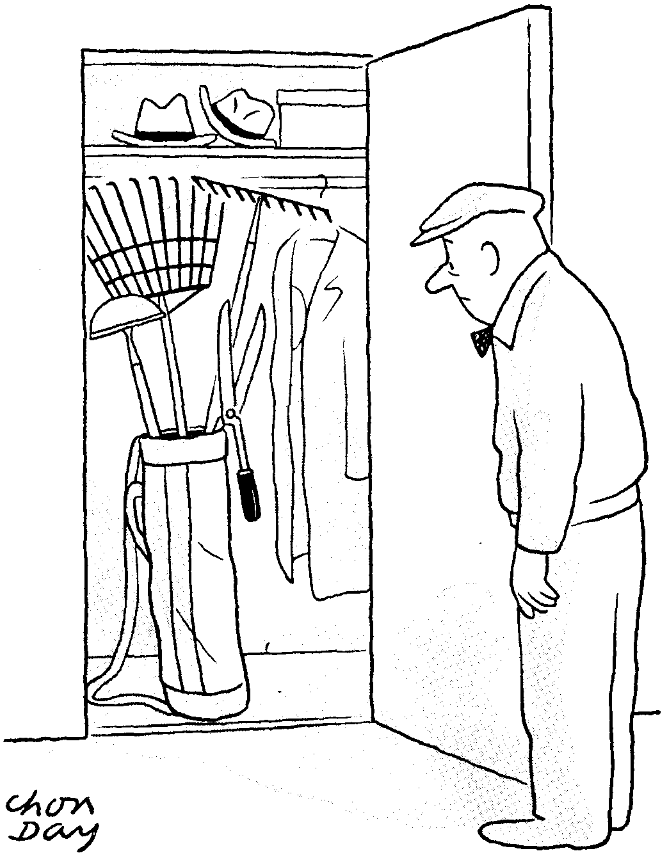
At first they all said, oh, it would be merely another of her protracted visits to St. Louis, and she would come back talking of nothing but her little nephews, who, of course, weren't really her nephews at all. She was only going for another stay with some of that Tolliver family she was kin to. Miss Betty's enemies were particularly skeptical. “Miss Betty Pettigru leave Nashville? The scene of all her victories? Nonsense! Never!” And they kept asking what on earth made her even talk of leaving. “I think I am going to St. Louis to watch my irresistible nephews grow up,” she said. “But you know me. Womanlike, I seldom know my own mind or what my reason is for doing anything.”

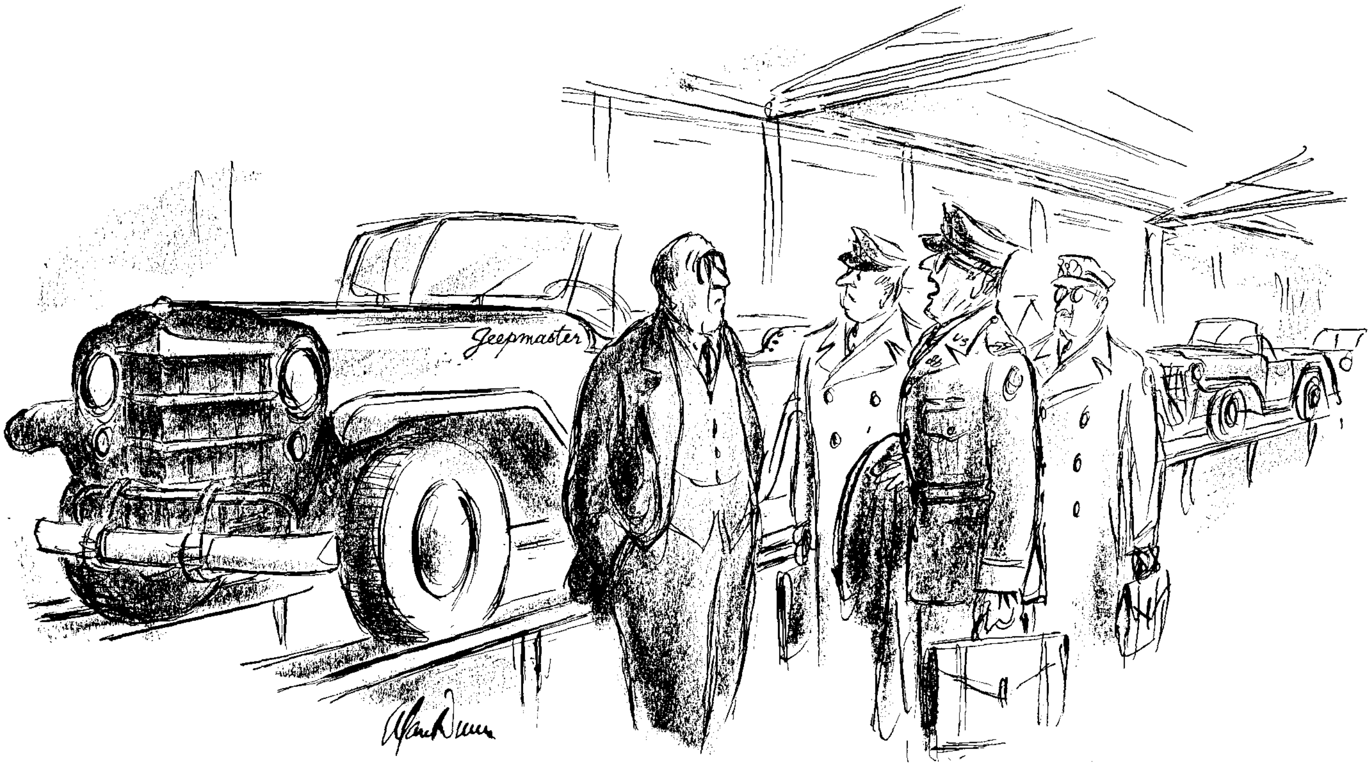
Her enemies nodded, and from behind tight little face veils smiled agreeably, but all they were agreeing to was that they did *know* Miss Betty, and had known her too well and too long to think she did anything without good reason. They remembered the time when she was a newcomer and when, without knowing her own reasons, she had become the close friend of one important hostess after another, until finally she was counted as one of them herself. “Miss Betty leave the scene of her great endeavor and attainment? Not likely.” The ladies, creeping home from luncheon in their electric cars and limousines, squeezed one another's white-gloved hands and repeated what Miss Betty had said about not knowing her own mind. Her saying that seemed to interest and irritate them more than her pretense that she would move to St. Louis. By everyone, her talk of leaving Nashville was considered “completely and entirely absurd.”

But then it came out in the Sunday paper that Miss Betty Pettigru had sold her house on West End Avenue—came out not on the society page but in the real-estate section. And it was this—its appearance in the real-estate section—that convinced everybody. Soon they learned that she had actually sold her lovely big limestone house, disposed of all but a few pieces of her furniture, and left for St. Louis in the company of her cousin and close companion of many years, Mrs. Florence Blalock. It seemed the end of an era!

When it was understood that she had really left the scene of her great successes, apparently forever, people began feeling sorry for Miss Betty, stuck off up there in that Middle Western city with those obscure cousins of hers. What could St. Louis hold in store for her after the life she had had in Nashville? What a tragedy it seemed for a lady who, though she had started life in a country town, had come to be considered a real social arbiter—what a tragedy for her to spend her last days in oblivion! Her Tolliver kinspeople were doubtless quite prosperous, but people could be ever so rich in a city like St. Louis and never be heard of in any important way. And the Tollivers weren't even from Nashville; like Miss Betty, they had come from the country town of Thornton, out on the Tennessee River, and *he* was only in some shoe business or other. Everybody knew that you could go to St. Louis in the mid-twenties and make money of some sort. But what did life offer in such a place? Coming there a stranger, you were relegated to the great Middle Western middle class. It was said, even, that different languages were spoken in different sections of St. Louis, and that the Germans lived to themselves in one section, the French in another, the Italians in another, and—who could say?—probably the Southerners in another. At any rate, all agreed it was a sad prospect for Miss Betty Pettigru and her cousin Mrs. Blalock. Perhaps the saddest part of it was that they were going to live in the very house with their relatives. One could just see them there and the roles they would play. Miss Betty was well past sixty, it was said, and she would age fast in those circumstances. It was extremely sad, and people in Nashville already talked as though Miss Betty were dead.

To Miss Betty and to her cousin Mrs. Florence Blalock, though, it seemed that they were getting the sort of new start in life for which everyone wishes long before he is sixty. In the first place, Miss Betty was not “well past sixty;” she was, as her cousin said of her, “only barely sixty-four, and in full vigor of life.” No one knew better how vigorous she was than did Mrs. Blalock, who was herself nearer seventy than sixty and had never known a vigorous day in all her time. She was a very thin woman, no taller than Miss Betty, and had never weighed more than a hundred and eighteen pounds—and that fully dressed, of course. She seldom smiled and in most gatherings maintained a silence that made people feel uneasy for her. She had lived with Miss Betty for thirty years, had travelled with her, had nursed and been nursed by her in times of illness, and had shared every facet of her existence except the social facet. For that, she was quick to say, she had “no particular taste.” She had





"*How long will it take you to evolve it back?*"

• •

consistently refused invitations that came to her through Miss Betty, opining that people only pitied her, or asserting firmly that she was there to help Miss Betty, not to be a burden to her. At a small draftsman's board in her room, she had practiced, with no little skill, the ancient art of blazonry. Although she was known as the finest living authority on the huge Pettigru-Tolliver-Blalock family connection, she was not actually related by blood to Miss Betty or to any other member of those three Thornton families. She was only the widow of a distant cousin of Miss Betty's—one Tolliver Blalock, a blackguard of a man, who had "disappeared off the face of the earth," leaving her childless and penniless.

During ten years, Miss Betty and Mrs. Blalock had been paying visits together to their St. Louis relatives, the James Tollivers. Their visits were frequent and long, yet as guests they had always had to have their stockings "rinsed out" by the maid and their breakfasts brought to their rooms, and had to be given little parties, which had been made up of mothers and aunts of the Tollivers' friends. At last, and quite unexpectedly, too, they had been told by Mr. James Tolliver himself that their visits were a bad length. Either they should come for shorter visits or they should come and live the year around as members of the household. Miss Betty had burst into tears on the spot—from pure shock, as she said afterward. James Tolliver, a very gentle and businesslike man of about forty, had tried immediately to relent. But there was no relenting once such a thing was said, and the decision had to be made.

How could anyone who had followed Miss Betty's social career imagine that she would make the choice in favor of St. Louis? The answer, of course, was that nobody but her cousin Mrs. Blalock could. Mrs. Blalock remembered the warmth with which Miss Betty had welcomed her into her house thirty years before, how she commenced calling her Flo Dear at once, how she talked of the longing she had always felt for a sister whom she could love. And, what was more, Flo Dear remembered how Miss Betty's kindness and generosity toward her continued even after she realized that her poor cousin could not supply the sort of family affection that she craved. Flo Dear knew that at the Tolliver fireside it would be a different story. The move would have still another advantage, and so when the decision was made, she got down on her knees and gave thanks that something at last had been provided to deliver Miss Betty Pettigru from fatuous, worldly old Nashville.

TO the Tolliver boys, it seemed that Auntie Bet and Flo Dear had always lived in St. Louis and occupied those two rooms at the end of the upstairs hall. The oldest boy was eleven, but even to a child as old as that, time means so little and a change of any sort comes so easily that within a month after someone puts up a house in the vacant lot next door, it is hard for him to remember how things were ever different. Before the two ladies had resided in the Tollivers' house six months, the boys would speak of something that had happened during last year's visit as though their "aunts" had already been living with them then, and they would have to be reminded that it was otherwise.

But to the boys' parents there seemed a big difference nowadays from the days when the aunts had been with them as guests: no more bother and to-do of long-distance calls, of meeting trains, of seeing to the comfort and entertainment of two female relatives. Instead, there were now two more adults to help the boys with their lessons and see that they ate their meals on time, went to bed on time, got off to school on time, and there was "someone responsible" always ready to stay with the boys when the parents wished to make a trip. It was as simple as that.

It was that simple for James and Amy Tolliver because, by their very natures, nearly everything in life was simple for them. They had not even minded the long semiannual visits as much as other people might have. It was indicative of what they were like that they had originally taken up with these two Tennessee ladies who were only remotely connected with James' family and whom he had hardly known when he was growing up in Thornton. Their paths had crossed, quite by chance, at Hot Springs, Arkansas, and the Tollivers would invite almost anyone they met on vacation to visit them in St. Louis. Their friends at home and elsewhere had all been made by such chances. They cultivated no particular sort of people and liked practically everybody they met. In college, James had met the son of a St. Louis shoe manufacturer, who afterward had found a place for him in his business. Soon the Tollivers were very well-to-do, owned a great brick house on McPherson Avenue with cement lions at the doorstep, kept two cars (a Pierce-Arrow and a Packard), enrolled their boys in private schools, and usually kept three Negro servants, whom they recruited from Thornton whenever replacements were needed. Probably their indifference toward whether they moved in or out of the best society was part of their charm for Miss Betty. Of Miss Betty's life in Nashville they knew practically nothing. They—and their servants—thought of her and Flo Dear in terms of their connections and their life back at Thornton, before they had moved to Nashville. In fact, one time Flo Dear's wardrobe trunk had almost got turned away at the door by the Tollivers' Negro houseboy, because he still thought of her as Miss Flo Smithwick, which had been her maiden name, before the Negro houseboy was even born. "No Mrs. Blalock here," he had said to the expressman. The trunk would have been sent back to Nashville except that old Vennie, the cook, had rushed to the door saying, "What's wrong with you, Nate? Don' you know Miss Flo and Mr. Toll Blalock got married?"

With James' parents—and with Amy's, too—the Tollivers had been affectionate and attentive, and so it wasn't too surprising that since their parents were now dead, they should form this attachment for Miss Betty and Flo Dear. They welcomed them into their family, commenced speaking of them to the boys as their aunts, and delighted in the proud, possessive, and adoring way in which the aunts talked about their nephews.

It wasn't long before the boys' aunts seemed to feel, with the boys, that they had always lived there. Reaching back into the days of their visits for anecdotes, they managed to vest each of the three little boys with a highly individual character. There was little Jimmy, who had a natural bent for arithmetic and knew his multiplication tables before he ever went to school a day. They stood in awe of his head for figures and wondered what it would be like to have a scientist in the family. They said proudly that they hated to think of what out-of-the-way opinions he might come to hold. Jimmy's birthday came on January 8th, and when he was "just a little fellow," he had figured out that if Christmas comes on a Sunday, then so must New Year's Day, and so must the eighth day of January, and then he had calculated how many times in his life Sunday was bound to ruin those three best days of the year. His aunts marvelled at him.

He was the second boy and in some ways the brightest. Vance was the oldest, and about him they said, "He is a very sober child, so respectful—and beautifully mannered." As for little Landon, they felt that one could not help adoring him, because of his sweet, dreamy nature and because he was the baby. His father sometimes spoke of him as "our little know-nothing," but Landon's aunts protested that he had an imaginative nature and a marked religious bent—admirable traits, both. Soon after they came there to live, Landon held a series of religious services in the upstairs parlor, at which collections were taken up for the starving Armenians. He read to the assembled family from the Bible and, since Flo Dear had been taking him with her to the Episcopal church, made them all get down on their knees to pray. But kneeling to pray proved too much for Landon's father, a country-bred Methodist, and the prayer meetings were stopped. As "just a little fellow," Landon had often spoken of Our Saviour as though He were a member of the family and actually present among them, always referring to Him as "the child Jesus." Once, Landon had got lost in the crowd at Sportsman's Park, and when they found him, in a corner near the turnstiles, he had said, "No, I wasn't scared. I just sat here and talked to the child Jesus."

Vance, the two aunts felt, really possessed the mind of a grown man. He was not so good in school as Jimmy and he didn't enjoy ordinary childish games—only handball and golf—but with business friends of his father he could talk about trends in the market, about national politics, and even, in a condescending way, about big-league baseball. An interesting thing to his aunts was that Vance was more concerned with the Browns than with the Cardinals. The two younger boys often complained about not getting to see the Cardinals play; the Cardinals were the *real* St. Louis team, and the knowledge that their father owned some sort of interest in the Browns made no difference. But Vance was enthusiastic about the Browns. And he was the same way about a certain orange drink his father had an interest in, always preferring it to Ne-Hi and Coca-Cola. He kept his room in good order and never had to be told to go and comb his hair or put on a fresh shirt.

Vance was certainly the best mannered. But not their favorite. They had no favorite. Miss Betty and Flo Dear were impartial, utterly and completely. If one of Mr. Tolliver's business friends said to them, "Tell me about your little nephews; I understand you're very fond of them," they would hardly know where to begin. Finally Flo Dear might say, "Well, Vance is the oldest."

"Yes, Vance is getting so grown up it frightens one," Miss Betty would add, as though she had been with him every minute since he was born.

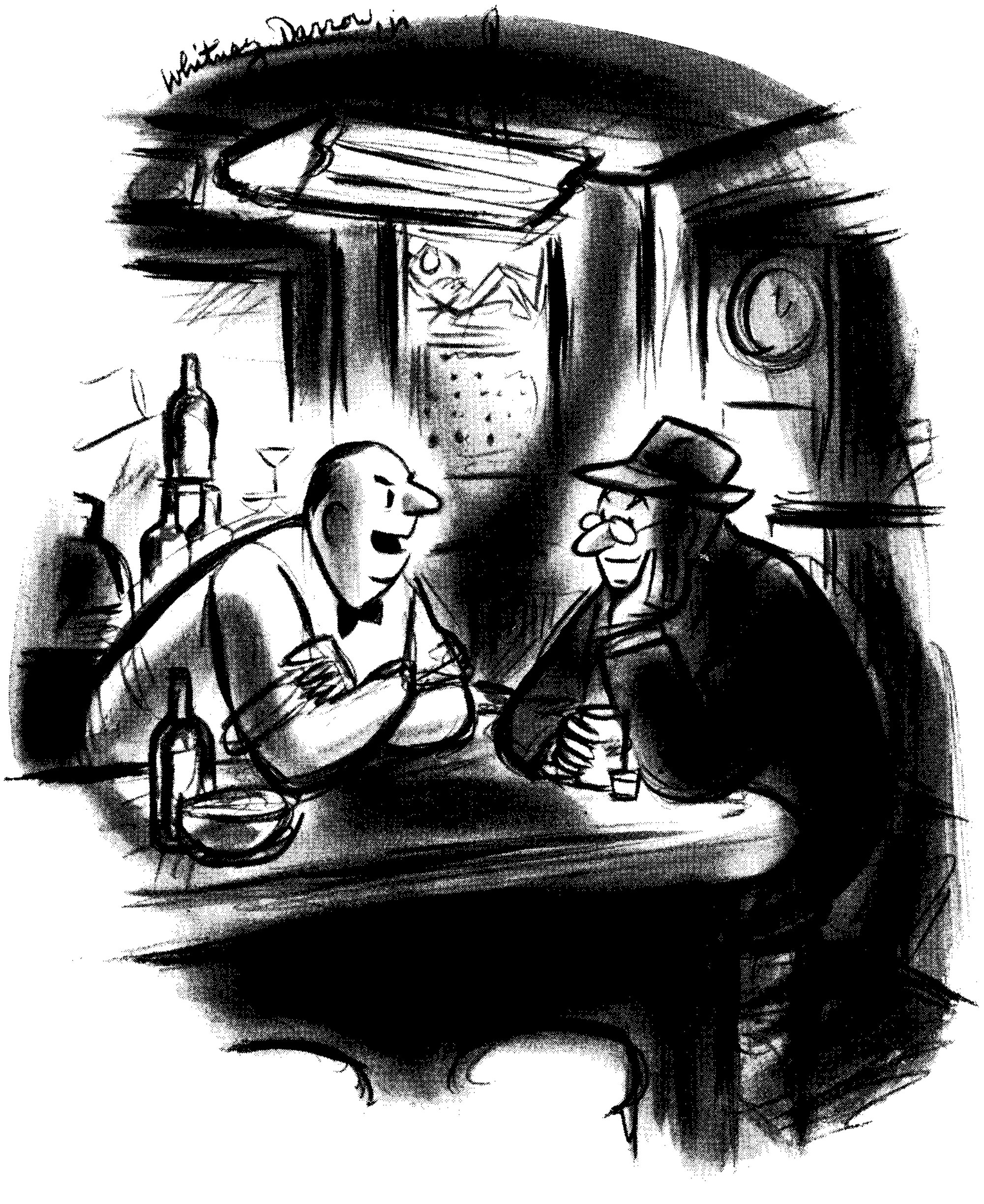
ALL in all, the move to St. Louis gave Miss Betty Pettigru just the new start in life that it had seemed to promise. She and her cousin had a small circle of acquaintances among the mothers and aunts of the Tollivers' friends, but they seldom went anywhere or saw anyone except the members of their own family. Almost at once, Flo Dear had set up her drawing board in her room, and very soon had completed a Tolliver coat of arms, which was hung in the library. Before long, she was accepting commissions from various friends of the Tollivers'. Miss Betty assumed just as many household duties as Amy Tolliver would allow her to. But Amy, despite her easygoing nature, was too efficient and farseeing a family manager to leave an opening for trouble in that quarter. Miss Betty, in the end, was left free during almost all her waking hours to be of service to her little nephews. It was the new start in life she had hoped for, and yet, almost upon her arrival, there began an unfortunate episode that threatened to demolish all this happiness. Within a matter of weeks after the two ladies were installed, a terrible competition for the boys' favor developed between Miss Betty and Vennie, the Tollivers' aging cook.

At first glance, it would seem that Miss Betty had all the advantages in the struggle with Vennie. She lived in the same part of the house the boys did; she ate at the table with them, was treated with respect by their parents, was at their service any and every hour of the day, not excluding Saturday and Sunday, when her chaperonage and financial backing were needed for excursions to the ice-skating rink or to the amusement parks and movie houses. Plainly, she was willing to throw into the battle the entire fortune old Major Pettigru, her father, had left her. She even went so far as to replace the town car she had sold upon leaving Nashville with a sea-green touring car, whose top could be put back in pleasant weather, and she added half again to the houseboy's salary in order that he might look after the car and drive her and Flo Dear and the boys on their expeditions.

Vennie's advantages were different, but they were real ones and were early recognized by Miss Betty. Vennie lived in the basement. She had not just a room there but an apartment, complete with an outside entrance, living room, kitchen, et cetera. One reached it by descending from the back hall to a long, narrow, poorly lit passage flanked by soapy-smelling laundry rooms, a tightly locked wine cellar, and the furnace room and coalbin. Her quarters were at the end of the passage. Miss Betty was destined never to go there, but in her mind she carried a picture of it that was as clear and accurate as if she had once occupied the rooms herself. The clearness was due to her knowledge of other such quarters she had visited in years gone by, but the accuracy of detail was due to the accounts her little nephews supplied. Landon told about the pictures on Vennie's walls: pictures of Negro children in middy blouses and other absurdly old-fashioned clothes you never thought of Negroes as wearing, pictures of Negro sergeants and corporals who had actually gone to France in the Great War (they all wore spectacles and looked, somehow, very unlike Negroes), pictures of Landon's mother and father and of other white people Vennie used to work for, in Thornton, and pictures of those other white people's children. Jimmy told about the horn on Vennie's old-timy phonograph and about the player piano and how it stretched and tired your legs to pedal it. Vance never said much about how things looked down there, but he talked about Vennie's "magic stove." Nothing cooked on the gas stove upstairs ever tasted like things cooked on that little coal range in Vennie's kitchen. And not one of the boys had failed to mention the dark scariness of the passage and how safe and bright Vennie's place always seemed when you got there.

Vennie's cooking, naturally, was a big advantage, but not such a serious one in itself. Auntie Bet could treat the boys to all manner of good things to eat when they went out. And what sort of handsome presents might she not have made them if it had been permitted! But it wasn't permitted, and Miss Betty didn't have to be told but once by Mr. James Tolliver that Christmas was the time—and the only time—when boys should receive expensive presents like bicycles and motor scooters. Amy and James were quick to shake their heads accusingly at her if one of the boys came back from Forest Park Highlands with even just a toy pistol he had won in a chance game. But when a three-layer chocolate cake was discovered in the lower compartment of the sideboard, and there was every reason to think other cakes had been kept there before and partaken of at will by the boys, despite all the rules against eating between meals, no more than a teasing, jovial finger was shaken at Vennie. Miss Betty protested that it really ought to be stopped, because Vance already had hickeys all over his face from so many sweets between meals. "But what can one do?" replied James Tolliver, shrugging his shoulders. "Vennie's like somebody's old granny, and since the world began, grannies have been hiding cooky jars for youngons."

Certainly James Tolliver would not have made that casual remark if he had known the pain it would cause Miss Betty. It came on a day when the boys had been repeating to her some of the stories they liked to hear Vennie tell,


Whitney Darrow, Jr.

"The way I figure it, you were a dethroned elder child in a sibling rivalry with your sister, who broke your affection monopoly in the family picture, all of which solidified into a protest pattern that crops up in periodic aggressions toward your wife."

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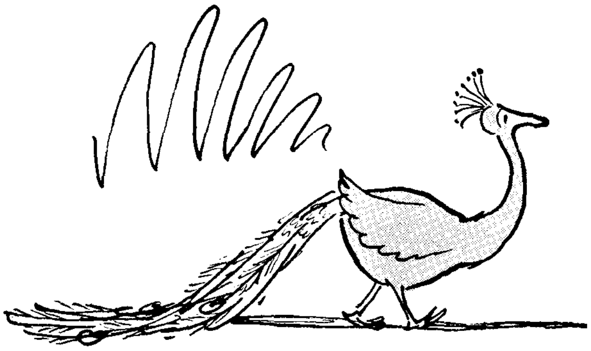

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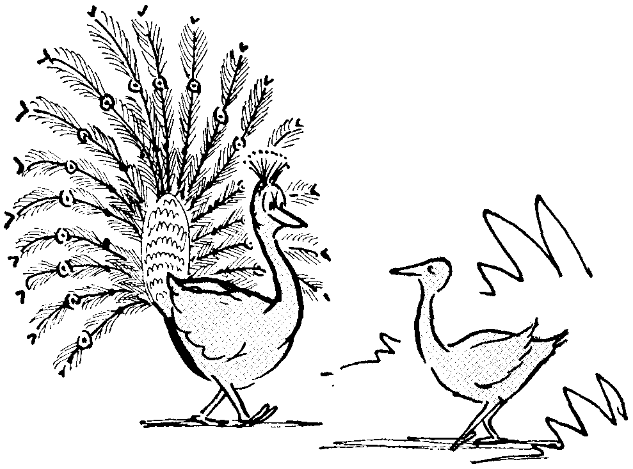

stories about the old times at Thornton and in the country along the Tennessee River where it flows north up from Mississippi. How Uncle Wash got lost in the snowy woods and slept in a hollow log for two nights, and how Mr. Ben Tolliver found him there and thought he was "dead and maybe murdered." How little Jane Pettigru fell down the old well and Vennie's blind dwarf brother, whose name was Pettigru, too—Jules Pettigru—was the only one small enough to be let down on a rope to bring the baby out. Vennie's stories and her way of telling them were surely her greatest advantage. Or, at least, it was the thing that most unnerved Miss Betty and made her feel useless to her little nephews. Occasionally, she had heard Vennie telling some old anecdote to the whole Tolliver family. Vennie would take her stance just inside the dining-room door, arms akimbo, her head thrown back, and wearing a big smile that grew broader and broader until she finished the story in a fit of laughter. Her stories were mostly about the Tolliver family and the Tolliver Negroes, about the wondrous ways they were always rescuing each other from dangers great and small, usually ending with some fool thing a field-hand Negro had said, or with Mr. Jeff Tolliver quoting the law to a pickaninny who had snatched an apple from the back porch. The really bad thing was that Miss Betty so often recognized Vennie's stories, remembered hearing other versions of them in her youth. Yet she could not tell the stories herself, or even think of them until something Vennie had told the boys reminded her. Sometimes she would recall a very different version of a story Vennie had told, but the boys were not impressed by Auntie Bet's corrections.

When the very first newness of Miss Betty's "treats" wore off, there would be times when she got all dressed and ready to take the boys somewhere and found that they were down in the basement with Vennie. Instead of sending for them, she would go to her room in a fit of depression, asking Flo Dear to tell the boys she had a headache and that they would go another day. Flo Dear began to worry. What was Miss Betty thinking about, shut away there in her room? Was she regretting her misspent life in Nashville, or was she regretting having left that life and wondering if she might return and face the people who had said this was only another of her protracted visits?

Miss Betty, in her room, never for a moment thought of turning back. Her fits of depression were very short ones. She might throw herself across the bed and lie there for ten or fifteen minutes, but soon she would be up pacing the carpeted floor or sitting by the window, tapping her chubby fingers on the wide sill. In her mind she went over and over the problem, knowing that finally she would hit upon a solution—or, rather, the means to effect the solution. The solution itself was obvious enough: It was clear that Vennie must be got rid of. The problem was how to achieve this without bemeaning herself in the eyes of all.

Introspection was not one of Miss Betty's weaknesses. She was never guilty of it unless it was forced upon her by events or by some other person; namely, Flo Dear. But for thirty years of Miss Betty's life Flo Dear had been, literally and figuratively, in the adjoining room. In such a crisis as this, that nearness could not help being felt. Since leaving Nashville, their relationship had been much improved. By the senior Tollivers, they were treated quite as impartially as they themselves treated their nephews, and this had the best of effects on both the ladies. Flo Dear no longer embarrassed people with her silences. She expressed her opinions freely at home, and among strangers she talked with ease about her and Miss Betty's interest in the boys. Miss Betty was pleased by the blossoming of her cousin's personality, and both of them had never before derived so much satisfaction from their friendship. Whereas Flo Dear's mere gratitude and loyalty had once seemed small return for Miss Betty's whole affection, it seemed quite adequate now that there were others to share that affection. And Flo Dear, if still unable to give her heart freely and directly to anyone, was able to participate in Miss Betty's devotion to the boys, and with the boys to feel a tenderness and uncritical affection for their Auntie Bet. But Miss Betty saw that all this, and more, might be lost. Vennie's departure, and the means of bringing it about, would have to be justified in the eyes of Flo Dear. *That* was the answer to Flo Dear's question: What was Miss Betty thinking about, shut away there in her room?

JAMES and Amy Tolliver were apt to say of almost anyone, "He is a genuine, intelligent, thoroughly sane person and has a fine sense of humor." They said something of the sort about Miss Betty and Flo Dear, and added that they were also "characters," which was the final term of approval. Amy especially was inclined to think everyone had a fine sense of humor. She herself saw what was funny in any situation and was wonderfully responsive to other people's humor, frequently inspiring them to say something quite beyond their ordinary wit. She would laugh heartily at things the two aunts said, though at least half the time James would say afterward that he didn't think she had been supposed to laugh. But Amy would reply, "Why, Flo Dear has a fine sense of humor," or "You don't do the boys' Auntie Bet justice, James."

No one was funnier to Amy than her own servants. She was forever laughing either at them or with them about something. But whereas many a South-

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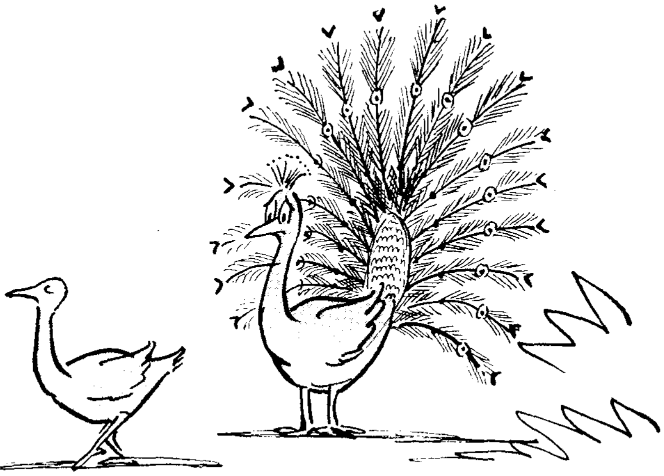

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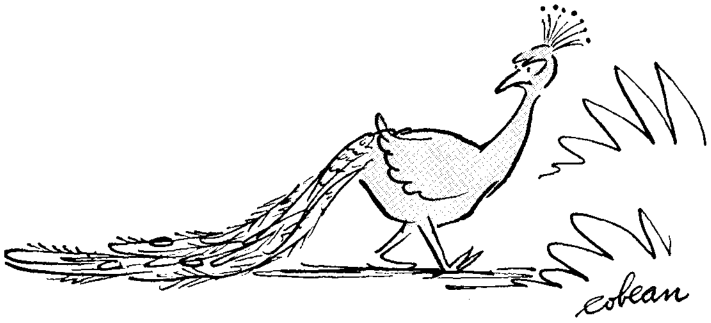


ern woman in a Northern city will get to be on rather intimate terms with her Southern servants, Amy never did. To some extent, she treated them with the same mixture of cordiality and formality that she used with her next-door neighbors. She nearly always liked her servants but never hesitated to "send them on their merry way" when there was reason to. "There are no second chances in Amy's service," her husband once said. "One false step and you are cast into the pit."

"Oh, stuff!" said Amy. "This house serves as a sort of immigration office for Tennessee blacks in St. Louis. We bring them up here and train them, and when they leave us, they always go to something better. You *know* that's so."

James laughed and said, "Only old Vennie is a permanent fixture here, I guess."

"Ah, have no illusion about that," said Amy. "Vennie's time is bound to come. And when it does, we'll be liberated from a very subtle tyranny. When Vennie is gone, I tell you, the turnover among the others won't be nearly so fast."

It seemed too funny for words when the current maid and houseboy could not get used to the fact that Flo Dear and Miss Betty were no longer to be regarded as guests. Despite all Amy could do, Emmaline would put only company linen on their beds, and every few mornings she would slip upstairs with their breakfasts on a tray. One morning, in an effort to put a stop to that, the two ladies came marching down the stairs carrying their trays, and they proceeded, amid general hilarity, to transfer their breakfast dishes to their regular places at the table. Emmaline was called in to witness it, and Nate, the houseboy, was also present. The two Negroes laughed more heartily than even the little boys at the two aunts' clowning. Amy seemed almost hysterical. "I laughed so hard I thought I was going to have hysterics," she said afterward.

But Miss Betty said, "The only signs of hysteria I saw were in Nate and Emmaline. They seemed downright scared to me." Half an hour later, when she went upstairs, she didn't stop a second in her own room but passed right on through it and through the bathroom into Flo Dear's room. Flo Dear had preceded her upstairs by some fifteen or twenty minutes and was already at work at her drawing board. Miss Betty knew that her cousin hated being interrupted, but what she had to say could not wait. "I am now convinced," she announced, "that all this politeness is that old Vennie's doing."

Flo Dear raised her eyes and stared at Miss Betty.

"It is now plain to me," said Miss Betty, "that Nate and Emmaline are taking orders from two mistresses."

Presently Flo Dear gave three quick, affirming little nods and said, "Yes, you're probably right. But you and I must not give them still two more mistresses." She and Miss Betty looked into one another's eyes for a moment, and then Miss Betty turned and retreated into the bathroom, closing the door behind her.

Yet very soon Nate and Emmaline began to have small pieces of change thrust into their hands at the oddest moments—when Nate forgot to put the pillow in Miss Betty's chair at table or when Emmaline put frayed and faded towels in the ladies' bathroom. Within a few weeks, the difficulty with the two younger servants was past.

MISS BETTY's three "nephews" went to a school on Delmar Boulevard, only a few blocks from home. School was out at one o'clock on Wednesdays, and it was their privilege that day to bring home as many as four guests to lunch. Since Wednesday also happened to be Emmaline's day off, it was Vennie's privilege not only to cook but to serve the meal to the boys. It was a privilege and an advantage of which she made the most. By a ruling of Vance's, none of the white adults were allowed to be present at that meal, and Vance often directed what the menu should be and even what china and glassware should be used. He always saw to it that Landon asked the blessing at that meal, and there was no horseplay whatsoever at the table. Vennie served in a black uniform with white cap and apron, and she never said a word until spoken to by Vance. But Vance, seated at the head of the table with his black hair slicked down on his head, the part glistening like a white scar, would faithfully begin addressing remarks to Vennie when dessert was about over. He did it in just the manner that his father did it whenever Vennie appeared at the evening meal, and Vennie responded with the same show of modesty and respect. "Oh, come on, Vennie," Vance would say. "Tell us about Uncle Wash's fight with the bear when they were laying the railroad to Texas."

Vennie would demur, saying, "Those boys don't want to hear my old-nigger talk." But finally she would be brought around by the insistence of all the boys, and never were her tales so exciting as then, and never so full of phrases like "plantation roads" and "ol' marster" and "befo' freedom." While she talked, Vance would sit winking at the other boys, just as his father would do. Vennie's favorite way of beginning was to say, "Now, every Tolliver, black or white, know this story and know it be true." It was a convincing way to begin and usually removed all doubt from the minds of her listeners. But on a Wednesday in the fall after the boys' aunts had come there to live, one long-faced little friend of Jimmy's stopped Vennie with the question "How do you mean 'black or white'? Are there black Tollivers?"

"What you think my name is?" Vennie asked, annoyed by the interruption.

"Your name is Vennie."

"My name's Vennie Tolliver," Vennie said. Her name indeed was Tolliver, since she had once been married to one of the Negro Tollivers at Thornton. The Negro Tollivers, like the Negro Pettigrus and Blalocks, had kept the name of their former masters after emancipation, and most of them had continued in service to the Tollivers. But Vennie's husband, like Flo Dear's, had long before "disappeared off the face of the earth."

The four luncheon guests all broke into laughter, because they thought Vennie was joking. Landon and Jimmy laughed, too. But Vance began to blush. His whole face turned red; even the part in his hair changed color. Vennie looked at him a moment in bewilderment, and then suddenly she began to laugh herself. "Didn't you-all know I was kin to Vance?" she said in a shrill voice. "Why, sho, I'm his cousin!" Her voice, which normally was rather deep and hoarse, grew clearer and higher. " 'Course it ain't really the truth, 'cause I 'uz only *married* to a sort of cousin of his. But I'm his old Auntie Vennie, all right. Ain't that so, Cousin Landon?"

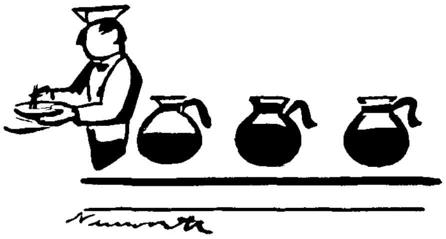
Landon smiled sweetly and said he guessed it was so. Vennie never did tell her story that day. Under her breath she kept laughing so hard that she couldn't have told it if she had tried. And the boys—all but Vance—kept giggling until they finished their dessert and left the table.

Worst of all for Vance was the laughter that night from the grown people. Landon told all about it at the dinner table, right where Vennie could hear every word of it. Vance at first managed to smile halfheartedly, but in the midst of all the talk and laughter he observed that there was no shade of a smile on his Auntie Bet's face. His own halfhearted smile vanished, and he and Auntie Bet exchanged a long look, which—in Vance's mind, at least—may have constituted some sort of pledge between them.

IT was Vance, with his sense of what the grownups liked, who had invented the pet name Auntie Bet, and he would have said Auntie Flo, except that Flo Dear had discouraged it. Instead, she had asked the boys just to call her Flo Dear, the way their Auntie Bet did. She was ever considerate of Miss Betty's prerogative as a blood relation, despite all of Amy's and James' impartiality. In her consideration, she went so far as to try to accept Miss Betty's views on every important thing that happened in the house. When the first complaints against Vennie were made to her by Miss Betty, she tried to admit their justice, while at the same time minimizing their importance. She imagined she saw seeds of Miss Betty's ruin in the struggle, and events pointed more and more in that direction.

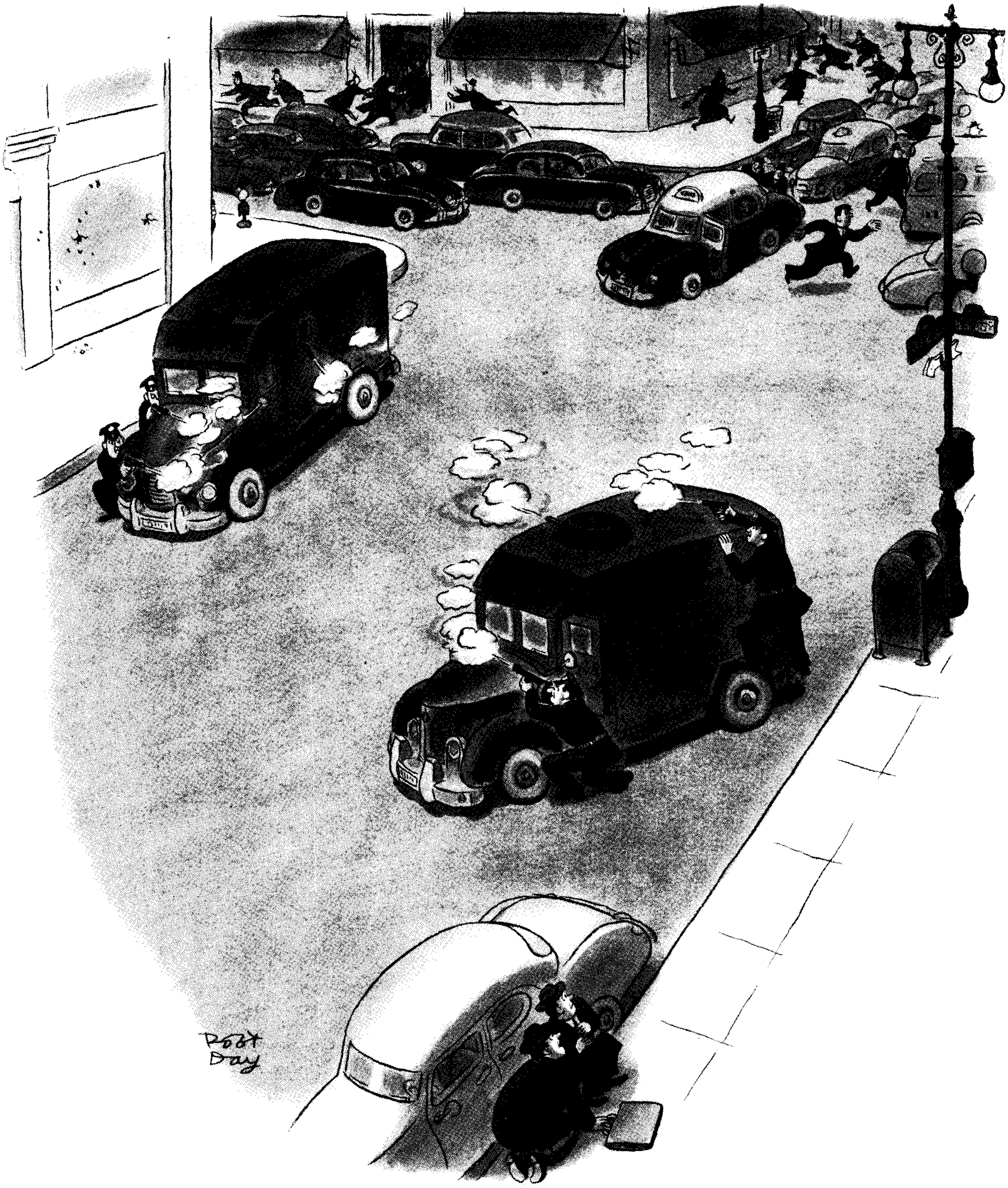
By Miss Betty's "ruin" she didn't mean that Vennie would remain and Miss Betty would go; she knew that Vennie would finally be sent away, but Miss Betty's ruin would lie in her very condescension to this struggle and in the means she would use to dispose of Vennie. If only Flo Dear could delay action on Miss Betty's part, then soon enough Vennie would be discharged for reasons that wouldn't involve anyone else, because Flo Dear knew, without listening at the hot-air register in the shut-off cardroom downstairs, that if Vennie entertained and cooked on her magic stove for the boys in her basement rooms, she also entertained and cooked for a large number of those colored people, or their like, whose pictures hung on her walls, and the food, of course, all came out of Amy's kitchen. She knew there would be a last time for Amy's saying, "My grocery bills are outrageous! I don't understand where the leak is. That is, I'm not sure yet."

Miss Betty's complaints were not all of indirect thrusts through the boys and the other servants, for after Nate and Emmaline had been neutralized, Vennie began, herself, a series of personal affronts. If Miss Betty crossed the threshold of the kitchen, she put down whatever she was doing and retired to the basement. If the two were about to meet in the narrow upstairs hall or on the stairs, Vennie would turn back and manage to get out of sight before Miss Betty could call to her. Miss Betty did try to call to her sometimes, or at least to speak to her—there was a period when she imagined it was not too late to make friends and join forces with her adversary—but Vennie would have none of it. At last, Miss Betty trapped her one day in the pantry and said, "Why don't you and I plan a surprise dessert for the family tonight? You make us a cake—one of your good devil's-food cakes—and I'll set us up to a wonderful new sort of ice cream they're making at a place I know out on De Baliviere."



Vennie rared back and her voice became shrill: "I been making the cream since before you-all come here, and I'll be making it when you and her's both gone."

When Flo Dear heard about this, her heart went out to Miss Betty in a way it seldom did. But she was also frightened by the look in Miss Betty's eyes. Ruin seemed inevitable at that moment—spiritual ruin, or, more specifically, spiritual *relapse*. Flo Dear's life in Nashville had been as quiet as Miss Betty's had been active. She knew that some people in Nashville had called her "Miss Betty Pettigru's silent partner." She had overheard people speaking of her that way, but she had said to herself, "I live this way because I have *chosen* to live this way." It was true that if she had wished, she could have shared all of Miss Betty's activities, for that was what Miss Betty had once hoped she would do. But the choice had been made long before she came to live on West End Avenue. Some moderns might say it was made while Flo Dear was still in her cradle. She didn't herself pretend to know when she had made the choice, but it was made before she ever married Tolliver Blalock and became a part of his huge family connection. In the big country family that she was born into, they had always told her she was by nature a mouse, to which she had replied (silently), "If I am a mouse, at least I am a principled mouse." But when she was twenty-two and already considered an old maid, she had been swept off her feet by Tolliver Blalock, the black sheep of his family and widely known as a rascal with women. He had left her after only two months, "disappeared off the face of the earth," leaving his hat and coat on the bank of the Tennessee River, more as a sign that he would never return than as any real pretense that he had drowned. As his widow, Flo Dear was taken to the bosom of the Tolliver-Pettigru-Blalock connection as no other in-law ever was. For years, she lived with first one of her in-laws and then another. They quarrelled over who was to have the privilege next. Apparently there had never been a mouse in any of those families, or at least not a *silent* mouse, and they delighted in how she would sit and listen to what *any* one of them said. She listened, and listened especially to the old ones, and then, one day, thinking it would help her forget for a while the loneliness and humiliation she felt in the bosom of her husband's fine family, she sat down and wrote out all she had heard about their



"*It all started when one of them cut in ahead of the other one.*"

• •

splendid history. As much as anything, it was to clear her head of the stuff. The manuscript was discovered and she became known as the finest living authority on the history of the Tollivers, Blalocks, and Pettigrus. After ten years of this life in the vicinity of Thornton, there came a letter to her from Miss Betty Pettigru, whose wealthy old father had taken her up to Nashville in the vain hope of finding her a suitable husband. Miss Betty was then seeking membership in the Colonial Dames of America and she wanted Flo Dear's help in that cause. It ended, of course, by Flo Dear's moving up to Nashville.

Searching through Nashville libraries for proof of Miss Betty's eligibility, Flo Dear found her true vocation, discovered the one passion of her life. It happened in a single moment. She was standing—tiny, plain, dish-faced creature that she was—in the dark and towering library stacks of what is surely the mustiest, smelliest, dirtiest, ugliest of state-capitol buildings in the Union. In her pawlike little hands she held a book whose faded title she was trying to read on the mildewed binding. Presently, despairing of making out the title there, she opened the book with an impatient jerk. It came open not at the title page but at the plates of two brightly emblazoned fifteenth-century escutcheons. They were the first coats of arms Flo Dear had ever seen, and the beauty of their joyful colors seemed suddenly to illuminate her soul and give her a first taste of the pure joy of being alive. Needless to say, the joy and inspiration she received from her discovery made the matter of talent an unimportant one. In practically no time at all, she became a modern master in the art of blazonry, and by the time she left Nashville, thirty years later, there was hardly a nice house in town on whose walls a piece of her work was not hung.

Flo Dear's work became the absorbing interest of her life. Yet it wasn't entirely her fault or her work's fault that she and Miss Betty could not become "as close as sisters." At first, Flo Dear was guilty of suspecting Miss Betty of disingenuousness. She could not see why Miss Betty made over her so and she felt that she was being "cousined" to death. Outside her profession, Flo Dear soon got so she could not abide the word "cousin." She felt that if she allowed it, Miss Betty would smother her with confidences. More than her time, somehow her small supply of energy seemed to disappear when she listened to her cousin. She simply could not afford the intimacy and dependency that was being asked of her.

There was more explanation than this: When old Major Pettigru was on his deathbed, he had said to Miss Betty, who was his only child, "It's a shame and a scandal, Bet. Since I brought you to Nashville, you've expended your time making a place for yourself among strongheaded women whiles you ought to have been making your place in the heart of some gentle, honest man." He had said that to her in the presence of two doctors and a nurse, and so almost immediately it had become known all over town. To most people it was an amusing story, but not to Flo Dear. She felt, exactly as Major Pettigru had, that Miss Betty had expended foolishly not merely her time but her invaluable, marvellous energy as well. Perhaps, with her unprepossessing appearance and her lack of small talk, finding a husband was not feasible for Miss Betty, but something—surely *something*—better than a life of social climbing could be found. It was worse than a shame and a scandal in Flo Dear's eyes; it was a sin. She had never told Miss Betty so in as many words, but she knew that Miss Betty knew what she thought, and she knew that Miss Betty acknowledged in her heart that she was right. Else why had Miss Betty always made a point of matching each social victory with some act of charity? When she succeeded in having Mrs. John O'Neil Smith impeached as Madam President of the Corinne Society (for having sat down to dinner with the president of a Negro college), she immediately gave a formal luncheon for the homeliest, least eligible débutante of the season. After she had blackballed every candidate for membership in the West End Book Club until the other members accepted an ambitious but illiterate satellite of her own, she paid a formal call on a notorious lady in town and went about saying that she, for one, thought that that lady's "adopted" child looked nothing in the world like its foster mother. Surely, in Nashville, Miss Betty's life had been all sin and expiation, sin and expiation, but with never a resolution to sin no more.

Miss Betty often spoke of her move to St. Louis as her "retirement." But even in Nashville, of course, Flo Dear had lived a life of retirement. Even in Thornton she had, for that matter. In Nashville, the only parties she ever attended were Miss Betty's Sunday-night parties. She did attend those, without fail, but always went to bed early, remaining downstairs just long enough to listen quietly to what Miss Betty's enemies were saying about Miss Betty in the music room or off in the sun parlor. (Miss Betty's most powerful enemies were always at her Sunday-night parties in large numbers.) When the last party guest was gone, Miss Betty would go straight to her cousin's room, rouse her from her slumber, and say, "Flo Dear, wake up and let's have one of our good talks." Miss Betty would be still attired in her party gown, its bosom more than likely embroidered with tiny beads or sequins, and she would often be wearing as many as three diamond solitaires on the chubby fingers of one hand. She would sometimes pace the floor, taking choppy little steps, while Flo Dear's faultless memory reproduced every condemning word she had heard that evening.

On these occasions, Miss Betty was spared nothing. People were saying she was going to bob her hair, people were saying she was losing her mind, people were saying she had been speculating and had lost heavily, people were saying

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that she had taken to smoking, drinking, doping, that she was leaving the Methodist Church and becoming a Bahaist, even that she was thinking of getting married. More to the point, and interspersed among things of this sort, which would often make Miss Betty laugh in a rather loud and vulgar way, were reports of the dark doings that could not be laughed away. In making these reports in a forthright fashion Flo Dear came as near as her position allowed her to come to satisfying her sense of duty to Miss Betty. The reports were unadorned, factual accounts of the impeachment of Mrs. John O'Neil Smith or the West End Book Club's selection of its new members, or even belated accounts of Major Pettigru's deathbed scene.

At the last Sunday-night party before Miss Betty's retirement, Flo Dear had sat at her listening post in the sun parlor for a while and then slipped away to her room with a new pamphlet called "Five Families of the Watauga Association." She fell asleep over the pamphlet almost at once, and when she awoke, she supposed at first she had been awakened by Miss Betty's footsteps on the stairs. She lay still, waiting to hear the footsteps in the hall and waiting for the door to her bedroom to be opened. When presently there was no evidence of Miss Betty's approach, she glanced at the clock on her bureau. Its hands told her that it was just past three o'clock.

She sprang from her bed and pulled on her dressing gown. The last guest was always gone by eleven. Could Miss Betty have come up to bed without waking her? Or could something dreadful have happened to Miss Betty? She hurried into the hall, which she found in darkness, and saw a crack of light under Miss Betty's door. Without hesitating, she went to the door and knocked gently upon it. "Flo Dear?" came Miss Betty's voice.

"Are you unwell?" Flo Dear whispered.

"Come in," said Miss Betty, and Flo Dear opened the door. She beheld Miss Betty recumbent, though clearly not in repose, upon her pink taffeta chaise longue. No longer attired in her party gown, she was wrapped in a wrinkled gauzelike negligee. With deep circles under her eyes and her features swollen, she presented a picture of misery to her frightened cousin.

"Are you unwell?" Flo Dear repeated.

"I'm all right now," said Miss Betty, pushing herself up and thoughtfully readjusting her body, with all its farrow-like plumpness, into a comfortable sitting position—so thoughtfully and thoroughly that it was clear her other position had not represented her latest state of mind.

"Have you *been* unwell?"

"No, not unwell. Right now, I'm only exhausted."

"From the party? Something dreadful happened at the party?"

"If it did, I didn't notice it," Miss Betty said wearily. "But I didn't notice the party itself much tonight."

"And you didn't come for our talk tonight."

"No, I didn't. I thought we might just let it go by this time. I'm exhausted from trying to think and—and to come to some decision. Thinking takes so much out of me, Flo Dear. But I've reached my decision."

"We're going, I suppose."

"Yes, we are really going to St. Louis, Flo Dear," she said. "Something in me says the time has come to give up Nashville. And that is why I didn't come for our talk. Don't you understand what I mean? My dear Flo, this night I have wrestled with an angel. I have been through the very valley of the shadow about this thing of going off to St. Louis."

A brightness came into Flo Dear's eyes; even a sort of beauty appeared momentarily on that sad little dish face of hers. "I am sure that you have won a splendid spiritual victory within yourself," she said. A phenomenal enthusiasm was in her voice. "I am happy, happy. I am truly gladdened."

The two women looked at each other in silence for a moment, and then they said good night. Next morning, Miss Betty called a real-estate agency and offered her house for sale.

"THEY have big get-togethers down there," Vance said.

"Big get-togethers?" said Miss Betty.

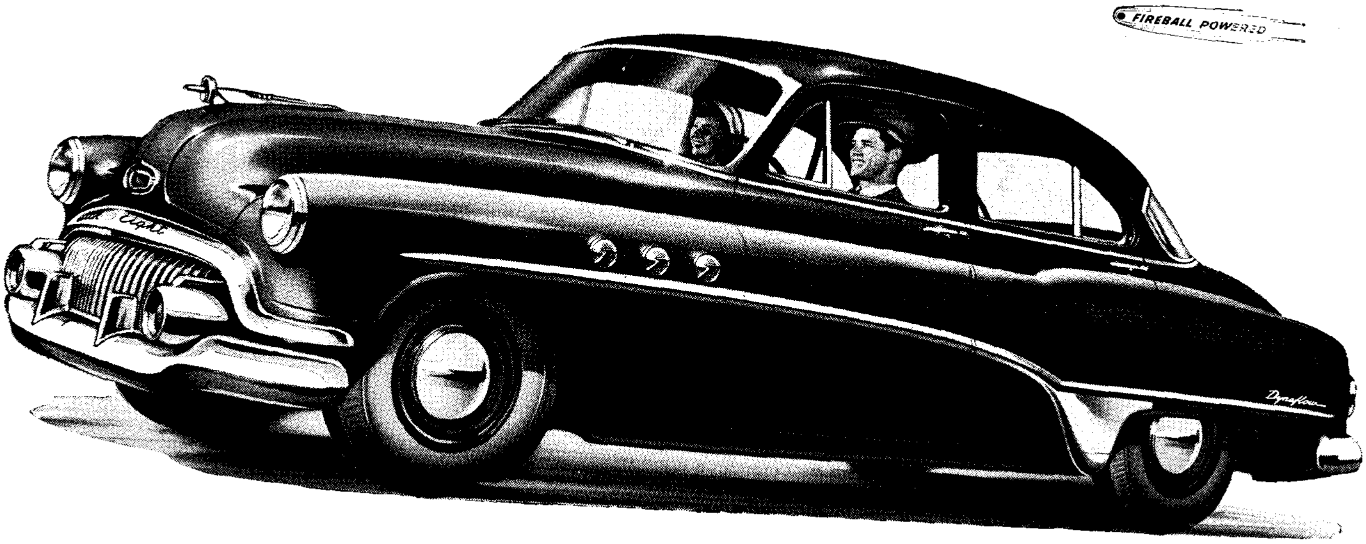
"Yes, Ma'am. Sometimes there's a whole crowd and sometimes not so many. We used to always listen to them through the radiator in here, till we got tired of it. Listen! That's Vennie's cousin who works out at the Florisant Valley Club. He's from Thornton, too, and used to work for us. Listen to them! They think they're whispering now. But you can hear them just as plain."

"Yes, you can almost hear them breathing," said Auntie Bet.

"And they can't hear you at all unless you really holler."

Vance and his Auntie Bet were in the cardroom, behind the drawing

Big step up



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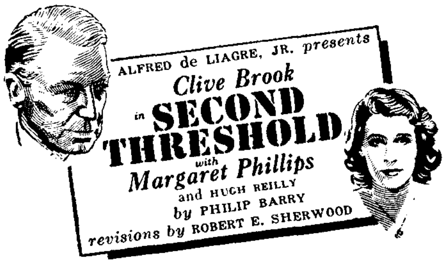

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room. It was a room that Amy kept shut off, because she and James were not card players and it was only another room for Nate to keep clean. It was a tiny room, and the furniture had been left there by the former occupants. There was a built-in game cabinet with a dozen different-size pigeonholes and compartments, and a "stationary card table," and some chairs. It all went with the house, the former occupants had said.

It was a Sunday afternoon and Vance and Auntie Bet were playing checkers. He had come back from a long walk in the park and had found her arranging some flowers in a vase on the hall table. When he invited her to go with him to the cardroom and have a game of checkers, she looked at him wonderingly, because she could tell that he had something on his mind. When they were in the room, with the door closed, and had begun to play, it occurred to her that perhaps the boys weren't supposed to play games like checkers on Sunday. And in the *card*-room, too. Then she began to notice the Negro voices coming through the hot-air register in the corner of the room. She was so distracted by her thoughts and by those voices that almost before she knew it, the game was over and she was badly beaten.

"Oh, you weren't even trying, Auntie Bet," said Vance.

She smiled—or, rather, she turned up the corners of her mouth self-consciously. "I tried, but I got to listening to the Negroes' voices in the radiator," she said. "We must be right above Vennie's living room." And then Vance told her about the get-togethers down there.

"It's rather eerie, isn't it?" she said. "I mean how we can hear their voices and they can't hear ours."

Vance began arranging the checkers for a new game. "Sometime," he said, not looking at her, "you might just come in here—you and Flo Dear, that is—when Jimmy and Landon and I are down in Vennie's rooms." He raised his eyes and said in a grave, reflective tone of voice, "Auntie Bet, that Vennie says the darnedest things to us, things she ought not to say to us children. You should just hear her."

"Why, *what*, Vance?" But before he could answer, Miss Betty had suddenly understood what sort of plot he was suggesting, and she abruptly got up from the table.

Vance instantly grew pale. "What's the matter, Auntie Bet?"

"Nothing's the matter, my darling," she said. "But I— I left half my flowers out of water." She was opening the door into the drawing room, but she glanced back at Vance and saw him still sitting with the checkerboard before him and with the bare light of the overhead lamp shining on his black hair, which looked rather too soft and too thick for a boy, and on the mottled complexion of his forehead, on the widespread nares of his nose. And silently Miss Betty Pettigru was saying to the oldest of her three Tolliver nephews, *Poor wounded, frightened child! What thoughts have you had of me? What thoughts?*

As she passed through the hall, she was surprised to see that she had indeed left some of her flowers lying on the big console table. She had bought them at a florist's on the way home from church that morning but had waited till Vennie left the kitchen to select her vase and arrange them. She snatched the flowers from the table and went upstairs.

In her room, she dropped the flowers in her wastebasket and, without taking off her daintily pleated dress, she lay down across the bed. This time, she was not up pacing the floor after fifteen or twenty minutes. She was still lying there when Flo Dear called her to go down to supper.

Ever afterward, when Miss Betty was reminded of the move to St. Louis, she thought first of that hour when she lay across the bed in her pleated dress. The night she wrestled with an angel in Nashville was as nothing. What had she known *then* of the valley of the shadow? It disgusted her to think of the frivolous use she had made of Biblical language that night. As she lay on her bed this Sunday afternoon, there was no language left for her to use. Her life in Nashville had never in her eyes been one of sin and expiation. It had just been life, plain and simple, where you did what good things you could and what bad things you must. As she looked back, it seemed that it had been hard for her to decide to leave Nashville only because it had meant facing the fact of the worthlessness of the goal she had set herself many years before—the goal set *for* her, really, by circumstances and by her personal limitations. What else could she have done with her life? She had not asked to be born in the days when Victoria was Queen of England, when Southern womanhood was waited upon not by personal maids but by personal slaves. She had not asked to be born the unbeautiful, untalented heiress of a country family's fortune, or to grow up to find that the country town that gave that fortune its only meaning was decaying and disappearing, even in a

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physical sense. The men of her generation, and of later generations, had gone to Nashville, Memphis, Louisville, and even to St. Louis, and had used their heads, their connections, and their genteel manners to make their way to the top in the new order of things. And wasn't that all *she* had done, and in the only way permissible for a Miss Pettigru from Thornton? Once the goal was defined, was it necessary that she should be any less ruthless than her male counterparts? In her generation, the ends justified the means. For men, at least, they did. Now, at last, Miss Betty saw how much like a man's life her own had been. She saw it in the eyes of the wounded, frightened child. She saw how it was that every day of her adult life had made her less a woman instead of more a woman. Or less somebody's old granny instead of more somebody's old granny. Wrong though it seemed, the things a man did to win happiness in the world—or in the only world Miss Betty knew—were of no consequence to the children he came home to at night, but every act, word, and thought of a woman was judged by and reflected in the children, in the husband, in all who loved her. "If only Flo Dear had not been so embittered before she ever came to my house," Miss Betty thought miserably, "maybe my instincts would not have died so dead."

She had done nothing to bring on Vennie's dismissal, and yet Vance had seen that she was capable of doing that something and had thought she might enter into a conspiracy with little children in the house of her kinspeople. If he condemned old Vennie for saying things to "us children" that she ought not to say, what thoughts must he have of *her*? All was lost, and in the morning she would go—not back to Nashville but perhaps to Thornton itself.

FLO DEAR knocked on Miss Betty's door from the hall. "It's almost suppertime," she said.

"Well, I'll be along soon," Miss Betty answered, not suggesting that Flo Dear open the door and come in.

"It's Nate's Sunday on," Flo Dear reminded her, "and Amy and James are going out to dinner."

Its being Nate's Sunday on meant that Nate would prepare and serve the cold supper and that someone must check closely to see that he washed the lettuce for the salad and that the table was set properly. Amy's and James' going out to dinner meant that the check on Nate would be Miss Betty's and Flo Dear's responsibility.

Flo Dear inferred from Miss Betty's

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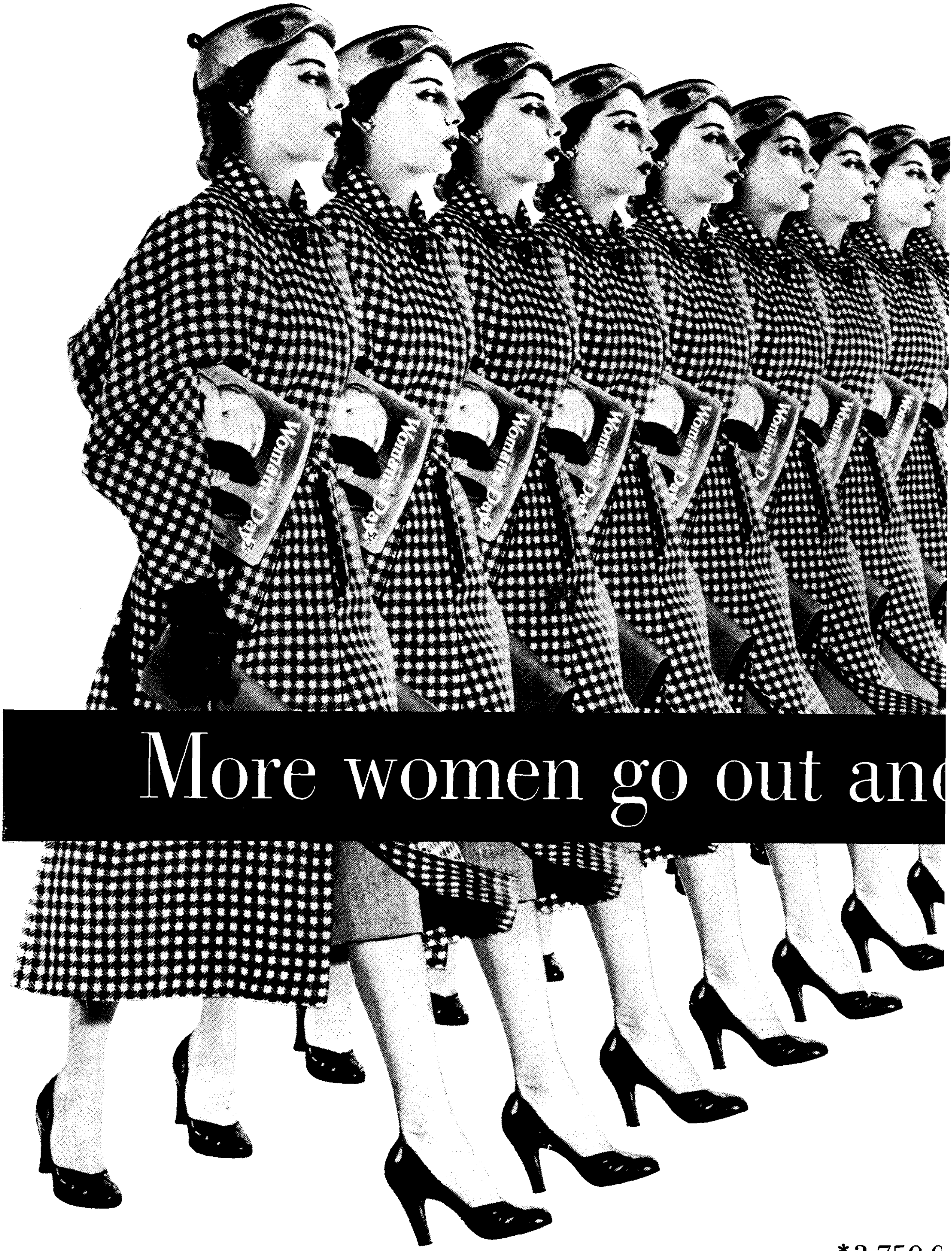

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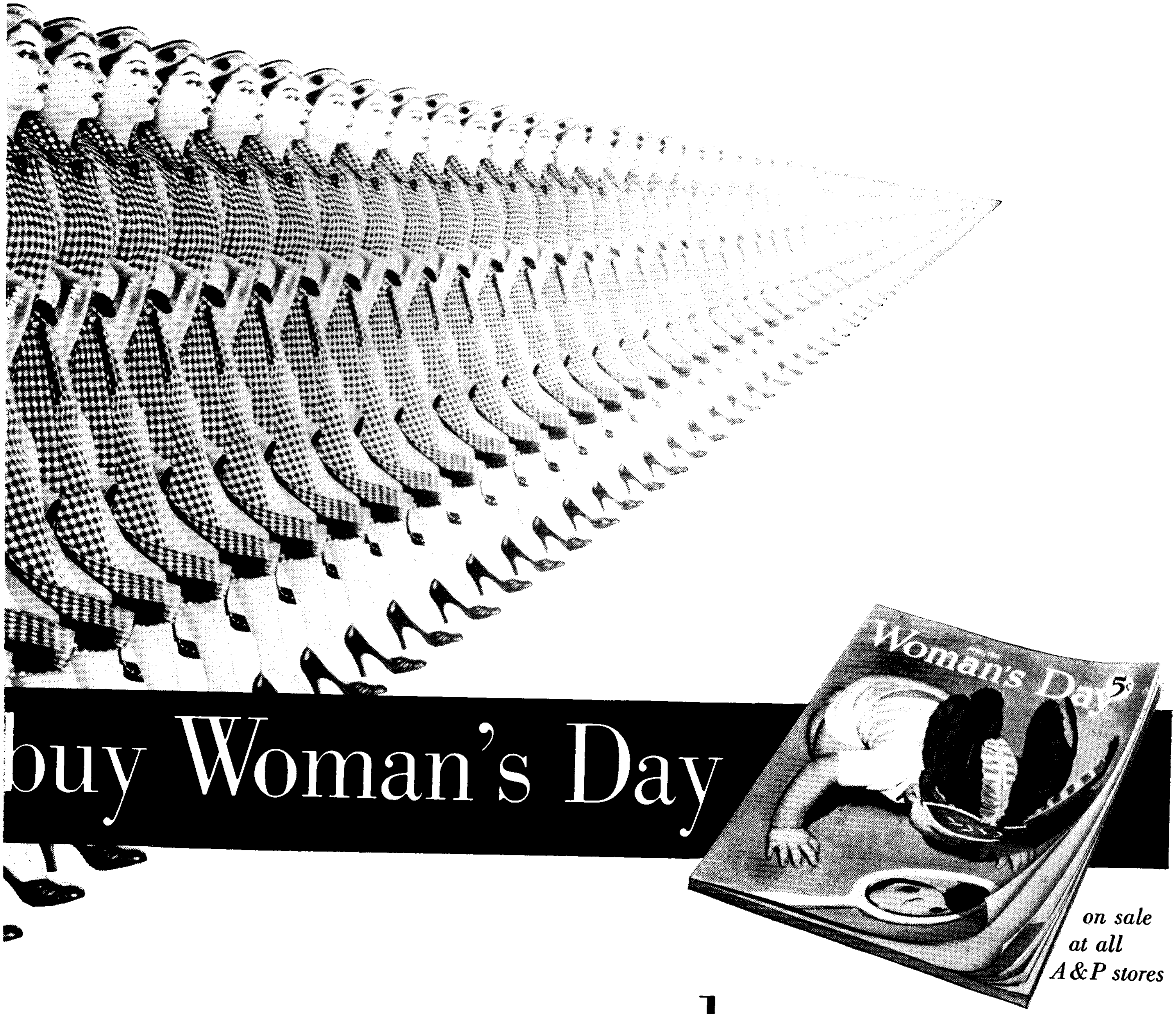

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being alone for so long in her room that there had been another incident. She had heard Miss Betty come upstairs an hour earlier, and although she had not put down her book, her mind had wandered more than once from the subject of heraldic symbolism to all the incidents of recent weeks. Miss Betty had managed to make it plain enough to her, in the way she reported the incidents, that Vennie's antagonism was directed equally at both of them. It was really Flo Dear, wasn't it, Miss Betty had asked her one day, that Vennie had made fun of to the boys and their Wednesday guests? During all their thirty years together, Flo Dear felt, this was the first deliberate unkindness Miss Betty had shown her. Yet she interpreted it as a "sign of nerves." It was so unreasonable that she could not really resent it. It was as though Miss Betty expected *her* to do something about Vennie. Even in Nashville, Miss Betty had never tried to involve *her* in her petty wars with womankind. She stood outside Miss Betty's door now, shaking her head and saying to herself, "Well, it can't go on. It can't go on. We must leave. We must leave Amy and James and their children to their peace. If we can't go back to Nashville, we—or I—*can* go back to Thornton." But the very thought of that prospect made Flo Blalock clasp her hands and shudder inwardly. Spending her last days among the remnants of the Tolliver-Blalock-Pettigru clan! Moving from garrulous house to garrulous house! She, the pitiable woman whom one of them had wronged. She hurried along the hall, past the room where Amy and James were dressing, down the stairs, and into the dining room to see how things were going with Nate. The light was on, but there were not even placemats on the table yet. "I declare," she whispered, "that Negro Nate is not worth his salt." She went into the pantry and into the kitchen. The rooms were empty. There was no light on in the kitchen, but one of the gas jets of the stove was burning, though no pot or pan was on the stove, or even a coffeepot. The emptiness and the silence and the half darkness, with that single, useless blue flame at the stove, made Flo Dear stop and shudder inwardly, just as she had done upstairs. It brought her a vision of desperate illness, of very advanced, helpless old age, of death. She had not yet known any of the real infirmities of old age, but she saw herself now blind, deaf, and— "transient" was the word that came to her mind: one strange, dark room after another, until the last.

The vision was of but a moment's duration. It was a result almost entirely, she reflected, of the gloomy thoughts she had been having upstairs. But it frightened her, nonetheless. And then, through the back door and vestibule, she heard Nate's footsteps on the cement driveway. She stepped to the back door and saw him, in his white coat, coming through the twilight from the garage—the old carriage house, where he had his room, in the coachman's loft. She could see that he saw her, and that he hesitated. "What's the matter, Nate?" she asked.

He came on up the steps. He was a tall, brown-skinned Negro and walked with a peculiar gait. Amy said he picked his feet up slew-foot and put them down pigeon-toed. As he came inside the door, he pretended to laugh. "You know what I done, Miss Flo? When I left out of here, I aimed to turn off the stove, but I turned off the light instead." He switched on the light and went to the table where the coffeepot and the open coffee can were sitting.

"And now you've left the light on in your room." She was still looking out toward the garage.

"Is I now?" He was filling the coffeepot.

Flo Dear was trembling. When she spoke, she hoped her voice would sound like Miss Betty's or Amy's or James', or Vennie's, or *anybody's* but her own. "Somebody's out there, Nate, who hasn't any business out there. Is that so, Nate?"

Nate put the coffeepot on the stove and then looked at Miss Flo, but not in his usual simple, big-eyed way. "Yes, Ma'am, they is. It's Vance."

Flo Dear couldn't find the words she wanted, but she continued to stare at Nate, and she knew that even with just a stare she was taking a hand in things. And now Nate, too, knew that she was taking a hand, and when he saw that, every last bit of foolishness seemed to go out of his face.

"I'm just going to tell you about it, Miss Flo," he said. "Vance come down here in the kitchen and he was crying around and wanted to talk to me. He said he had hurt Miss Betty's feelings and wouldn't never git over it, and he was scared to talk to his daddy or Miss Amy about it. He wanted to go out yonder to my old rooms to talk with me, so I just taken him on out there, Miss Flo, and he and me had it all out. He'll be along in the house directly."

Flo Dear sat down on a chair beside the table. "Tell me how he hurt Miss Betty's feelings, Nate."

Nate, looking right into Miss Flo's eyes, stood before her and told her how

Vance had got Miss Betty to go in the cardroom and all they had said there and finally how Miss Betty wouldn't really listen to Vennie and her company and wouldn't "be conniving with any little old Vance."

When he had finished, Flo Dear made no move to go. "You begin setting the table, Nate," she said. "I want to just sit here awhile."

AMY and James came downstairs in evening clothes. They were going first to a cocktail party and then to a large supper party honoring the débutante daughter of two of their friends. They knew that Miss Betty always liked to see them when they were "dressed," particularly if they were going out among people whom she considered "prominent in an important way."

Amy went to the dining-room door to see if the two ladies were in there. Nate was just beginning to set the table. "You're late getting started with that, Nate," she said.

"Yes'm, ain't I, though? I got behind." He was all big-eyed simpleness again.

"Well, have you gotten Mr. James' car out?"

"Yes'm, it's at the side."

"Hasn't Miss Betty or Miss Flo come down?"

"Miss Flo's back here," he said, and he dashed off toward the kitchen. Amy stood watching the swinging door until Flo Dear appeared.

"How lovely you look, Amy," said Flo Dear, coming into the dining room. "Nothing so becomes you as green, Amy." Compliments from her were rare but not unheard of. Such compliments on Amy's appearance were Miss Betty's prerogative, but now and then, when Miss Betty was not present, Flo Dear would say something like this.

"Why, I thank you, Flo Dear," Amy said. "A compliment from you really sets me up. You're not the wicked flatterer Aunt Betty is."

"She's just more articulate than I, Amy."

"Pooh," said Amy, turning back into the hall. "Where is she, anyway?"

"Here she comes from upstairs now," James said. He was standing near the foot of the stairs, his derby on his head, his overcoat over one arm and Amy's white lapin wrap over the other.

"Take off your hat in the house, James," Amy said. "What will your aunts think of you?"

"It's time we're going," James said, holding up Amy's wrap for her.

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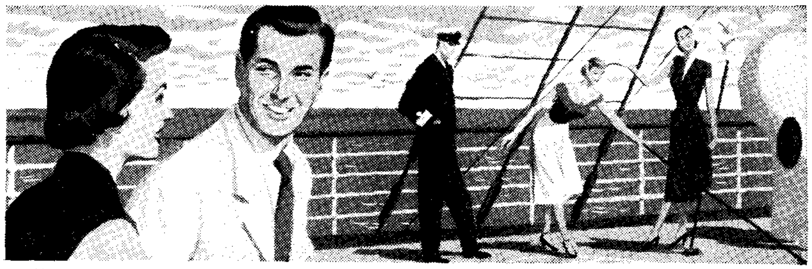

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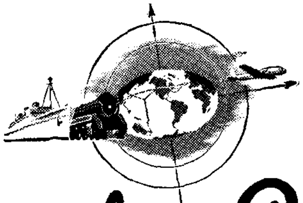

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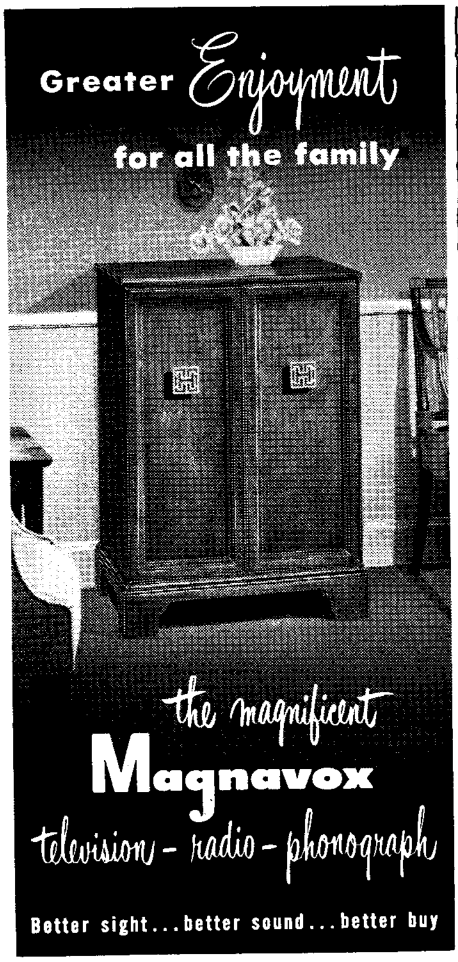

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dress," called Miss Betty from the stairs, rather spiritlessly.

The others looked up at her. "Aunt Betty, you don't sound like yourself," Amy said.

"I've been taking a nap," she said. "You look lovely, Amy. It's a stunning dress."

Amy's dress was of a dark-green silk, with a long waist, a very low back, and a hemline just at her knees. Her hair was not bobbed, but tonight she had it arranged in a way that made it at first glance look so.

"She looks sixteen, doesn't she?" said Flo Dear.

Suddenly Amy called out, "Boys! Boys! We're going!"

Landon and Jimmy came racing down from upstairs, and in a moment Vance appeared in the doorway from the dining room, looking solemn and dejected. Miss Betty went to him and put an arm about his shoulders.

Amy, seeing that all that was going to be said about her new dress had been said, allowed James to put the wrap about her shoulders.

"If you boys behave and mind your aunts," James Tolliver said, getting into his coat, "I'll take you to East St. Louis with me next Saturday. I'm going out to see old Mr. Hendricks at the stockyards."

Jimmy was standing on the bottom step of the stairs. Partly, no doubt, because he didn't like to go to East St. Louis but mostly because he wished to satisfy his thirst for scientific truth, he asked, "Why do you say 'our aunts' when Flo Dear is not our aunt or even related to us and Auntie Bet isn't really our aunt, either?"

Jimmy's mother and father looked at him as though he had spoken an obscenity. "Jim, are you asking to be punished?" his father said. "Do you want me to take you upstairs in my dress clothes and punish you?"

Amy dropped her velvet evening bag on the console table and sat down in one of the high-backed hall chairs. This was her usual way of saying she wouldn't go somewhere until the boys stopped misbehaving. It was also a way of emphasizing her speechlessness. After a moment, she said, "Just what do you mean by that, James Junior? What earthly power made you ask that?"

Flo Dear glanced at Miss Betty and saw that she had managed to catch Vance's eye and was shaking her head at him warningly. Jimmy was blushing and carefully avoiding the eyes of his aunts. He kept looking first at his mother and then at Landon. After a moment, Landon, who was always the one most moved by his mother's threats, said to Jimmy, "Go ahead and tell, Jimmy. It's just Vennie, and she always says she doesn't care who you tell." Then, turning to his mother, he said, "Vennie's always saying we aren't a bit of kin to Flo Dear, and not much to Auntie Bet. And she thinks they ought not to live with us unless they are close kin."

But Jimmy still had not told when his father pulled the derby off his head and was saying, "You boys—all of you—get upstairs to your rooms and get up there quick."

The three boys were upstairs and in their rooms almost before their father had taken off his overcoat. He removed the coat with great care and folded the sleeves and the collar as though he were about to pack it in a travelling bag. Then he handed it and his derby to Amy.

"Oh, James," said Miss Betty in a hoarse whisper, "don't punish the boys."

"I'm not going to punish the boys," he said. "I'm going downstairs before I leave this house and give Amy's notice to Vennie."

"No," Miss Betty said, "don't do that, James!"

But Amy said, "Tell her she needn't even come up in the house again."

"I'll meet you at the car, Amy," he said to her, and as he went out through the dining room, he called back, "I'll tell Nate to stay in the house all evening, till we come home."

When he was gone, Amy tried to smile. "I don't know why he couldn't wear his overcoat to fire Vennie," she said. "A sign of special respect, I suppose."

Miss Betty, wearing a dazed expression, said, "This won't do, Amy. It just won't do."

"Oh, it'll do fine, Aunt Betty," said Amy. "Don't you think I know what's been going on in my own house? It was James who had to be shown. He has been Vennie's protector since long before this business. And Emmaline and Nate both gave me notice a week ago; I've been sick about it. Why, for a houseboy, you just can't beat that simple-minded Nate. No, my dears, Vennie's days of usefulness in this house are past. Her superannuation is long overdue."

SUPPER for Miss Betty and Flo Dear and the boys was delayed for three-quarters of an hour that Sunday night. Nate was an eternity getting the food on the table, but none of them was hungry, and so it did not matter. Not long after their parents were out of the house, Vance and his brothers came downstairs and into the living room, where the two aunts were sitting together. But before the boys came down, Flo Dear and Miss Betty had exchanged a few words, and each had had a great many thoughts that were not exchanged, at least not in words.

They were seated directly opposite each other on either side of the fireplace, in two little Windsor chairs that were the only uncomfortable chairs in the room. Last embers of the usual Sunday fire were smoldering in the wood ashes between the andirons. When first they sat down, there was a long silence, with each of them staring into the embers, watching an occasional flame spring up and then die almost at once. Miss Betty's small, pudgy nose seemed swollen and her eyes were two glazed buttons. She sat with her feet placed far apart, her ankles looking swollen like her nose, and on her knees her hands rested, the ten fingers spread out like so many wrinkled little sausages. Flo Dear sat crossing and uncrossing her narrow ankles, fingering the buttons that ran from the high neck to the waist of her dress, and blinking her eyes at the fire.

At last, without changing her expression or moving a muscle of her body, Miss Betty said, "We should go on back to Nashville, I think, Flo Dear, or maybe to Thornton." She wanted to tell Flo Dear that she had had no hand in Jimmy's outburst, but it would be useless and somehow not entirely truthful to say that. Yet at the very moment she was saying that they must leave and thinking that they must, she was also thinking that if they could stay, if they could only stay, she might, with her new insight, begin to be of some use to the Tolliver boys. After all, they were rich children, just as she had been a rich child, and the world was still changing, preparing people for one thing and giving them another. And poor little Vance—what problems would be his! Not excelling in his schoolwork, certainly not good-looking, with only that one terrible talent that she, too, had—the talent for observing what things the world valued and making the most of *that*.

But she knew that she could not spend the last years of her life with Flo Dear sitting there so straight in the Windsor chair, accusing her with every crossing of her ankles and every blinking of her eyes.

All that Flo Dear said before the boys came down was "We must do whatever seems the right thing to you and the best thing for the boys." From this, Miss Betty took hope. She detected a new softness in Flo Dear's voice. It was a softness that came from Flo Dear's own reassessment of things. Whether

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it was the thought of Thornton or her thoughts in the dark kitchen or the knowledge that Miss Betty had been truly hurt by Vance's proposal, something was making her question her old judgments of Miss Betty Pettigru. It seemed to her that perhaps to do anything at all in the world was to do wrong to *someone*. She thought of Vennie and of what would become of her now. Perhaps it was fair and just that Miss Betty should have the affection the boys gave to Vennie. Perhaps Vennie had nieces and nephews of her own. She could go and live with them or with some of her many friends. There must be many of her relatives who loved and needed old Vennie. And yet perhaps she didn't really have a family of her own. Or perhaps none of them would find her so lovable and attractive when she no longer had this good job and could make them presents and cook them meals on her little coal range. But already Flo Dear could hear Vance and Jimmy and Landon coming down the stairs into the hall.

When the boys came into the living room, with their hair combed and wearing fresh shirts, Miss Betty and Flo Dear stood up and greeted their nephews as though it were after long months of separation. And the boys seemed equally glad to see their aunts. There was even kissing and hugging, and there were some tears shed. Supper was still not on the table (the cheese toast just would not get done!), and though Miss Betty complained about Nate's being "so mortally slow," Flo Dear did not say again that he wasn't worth his salt. Instead, she gathered the three boys about her chair and commenced explaining to them, as no one else in the world was so well qualified to do, just exactly what her family connection was with them, and in even greater detail she described the blood ties that existed between them and their Auntie Bet.

For a while, Miss Betty watched this scene with tears in her eyes. But then she went and lay down on the sofa. It would be no mere protracted visit to St. Louis; she was here for life. And when, finally, Nate announced supper, Vance had to go and touch Auntie Bet's hand to wake her from a deep, dreamless slumber.

—PETER TAYLOR

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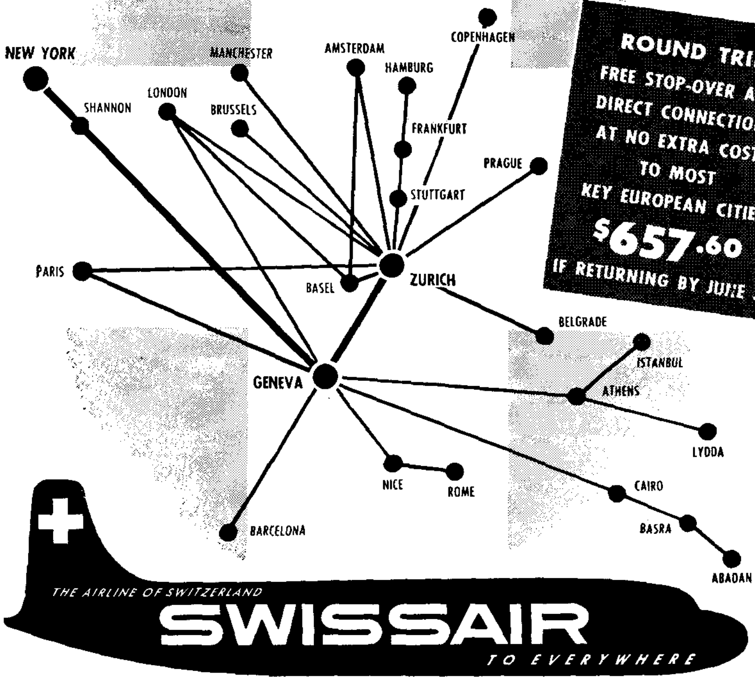

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Molière, not long after he wrote "L'Ecole des Femmes," or "The School for Wives," and put it on the stage, in 1662, went to the trouble of writing another play, a one-act job (which he also put on the stage), solely for the purpose of answering criticism of the first one. "L'Ecole des Femmes" is the only play I know of that was ever reinforced from the rear in this thoroughly professional way, though there may well be other examples on record, playwrights being as vigilant in pro-playwright causes as they are. G. B. Shaw and Maxwell Anderson, of course—among a great many others—have struck back at criticism of their plays in offstage prose. Molière's rebuttal, which he called "La Critique de l'Ecole des Femmes," is somewhat more good-humored than any of Shaw's or Mr. Anderson's that I've seen. I suppose the author thought it would keep "L'Ecole des Femmes" out of difficulties with audiences and reviewers for a long time to come, since it disposed gracefully of all the objections that he had any knowledge of. He did not foresee—and it's probably as well that he didn't, for he is said to have been a nervous man—that his play would be performed nearly three hundred years after he wrote it, in the language in which he wrote it, before a Broadway audience. The only criticism I can make of "L'Ecole des Femmes" as it was introduced a week ago last Sunday night, for a seventeen-day engagement at the American National Theatre and Academy Playhouse, has its source in that combination of circumstances. An unrelieved fusillade of seventeenth-century French is bound to rattle any representative local audience at this date, and in spite of the fact that March is International Theatre Month, by joint ruling of the A.N.T.A. and Unesco, the March audiences at the Playhouse have been, I gather, representative local audiences. "L'Ecole des Femmes" is especially tough to handle, even for amateur or semiprofessional French students, because it is written in tight, fast couplets, in many of which the words are placed out of the normal order for the sake of the metre, or to make a rhyme. I'd say, in short, that it's impossible for playgoers in this town, in this century, to judge Molière's play as he would have liked it to be judged, and that the author's "La Critique" must, in the present circumstances, run for Sweeney.

No one will have trouble following the plot of "L'Ecole des Femmes." The tones and gestures of Louis Jouvet, as the middle-aged guardian of a girl he wants to marry, of Dominique Blanchar, as his ward, and of Jean Richard, as a young man who plans to filch the girl, are much too explicit to be misunderstood. And besides, the program provides an inning-by-inning synopsis in English. M. Jouvet, the star and manager of the show, and one of France's most revered and most versatile actors, is a particularly vivid telegrapher with his hands and eyes. Bobby Clark, playing a different Molière play a few years ago, in translation, did not make the surface lines of the story any clearer in English than M. Jouvet does in this case. It is said that Molière himself, who was the first to play the role of Arnolphe, the Jouvet part, was an emphatic mugger on the stage, so M. Jouvet's style belongs (Mr. Clark's did, too, for that matter) to a great and official tradition. But the plot is less than fifty per cent of the meat of "L'Ecole des Femmes." If you want to renew your appreciation, or check what you've heard, of the lasting sharpness of the author's satirical gift (which in this play is aimed mainly at irresponsible egotism), you'll probably get better results from reading "L'Ecole des Femmes" than you will from seeing it. That's not to say that it can't be enjoyed in M. Jouvet's production. Even that way, it's easy to see that Molière knew as much about the follies of man as any one playwright has ever known.

—John Lardner

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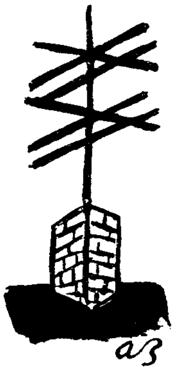
TELEVISION

A Letter

DEAR AUNT PAULINE:

IT sure is lucky I work nights. I've been meaning to write and thank you for sending the cookies, but I've been so glued to my video machine the past ten days that I've barely had time to shave, much less time to write and say thanks for the cookies. Aunt Pauline, the things I've seen right in my own room, and the *people!* That first Monday morning, when I switched on my video and witnessed an odd-type crime-and-courtroom program getting under way, seems a long, long time ago. I remember thinking, This is a funny program to be televising in the A.M., which they usually devote to telling the people how to boil an egg and where to buy a hat and other useful things, but I settled down before the machine. A group of serious-looking men were seated at a courtroom bench, and a witness was seated below them at a table, and they were questioning this gentleman, who wore pince-nez, about some people they referred to as "bookies" at his race track, out on Long Island, N.Y. I gathered that this man ran the race track and that he had paid a very important man called Mr. Frank Costello sixty thousand dollars to get the "bookies" off the track, and that he never had asked Mr. Costello how he performed this service, or whether he did a good job, or anything. He just paid him fifteen thousand dollars a year for four years, and the only reason he stopped paying it was because the federal income-tax people wouldn't let him deduct the expense on his income-tax blank. I figured to myself, Aunt Pauline would certainly enjoy watching this program, especially with Uncle Ned always whooping and hollering around the house about taxes, and how the big fellows get away with murder and the little fellows pay through the nose.



Well, when this program kept right on going, through the afternoon and the following day and the day after, I realized it was a serious, real-life drama, and no laughing matter. Fellow after fellow came before the cameras—a round-faced Mr. Erickson and a natty Mr. Adonis—and the serious men on the bench kept hinting that these fellows were shadowy figures of the "underworld," controlling big enterprises and activities, but none of the fellows seemed to have any brains at all; they couldn't remember a thing. I couldn't figure out how they could run such big businesses, they acted so stupid. The most important man was that Mr. Costello. He turned up time and again, and the men on the bench seemed awfully anxious to snoop into his affairs. A very intelligent-looking man on the bench, a Mr. Halley, asked most of the questions, and he left the impression that Mr. Costello had his fingers in almost *everything* in New York City—gambling and politics and night clubs—and was just about the most important man in the city, in a scary sort of way.

This Mr. Costello himself was one of the most interesting men who have ever been in my house—through video, I mean. He started right out by saying, by way of his lawyer, that he didn't want his face televised, because it would make a spectacle of him, and the cameras focussed on his hands. I thought this made him more of a spectacle than if they had shown his face, and I didn't think they had any right to photograph his hands. (As a matter of fact, Aunt Pauline, the more I watched this engrossing program, the more I wondered how fair it was to ask witnesses to appear on video, if you know what I mean.) Mr. Costello was quite shy and reticent. He had more ways of not answering a question than anybody I have ever listened to. He would say, "It's Greek to me," or "I'm retired," or "I don't remember," or "I don't answer no trick questions," or "I'd sooner *him* answer that question," or "Not to my knowledge, no," or "Anything's possible," or "That don't make me a liar," or "I might have—on and off," or "I don't remember that partickler conversation," or "I'm not trying to get away with nothing," or "You aren't going to put any words in my mouth," or "That's ridikulus," or "I been racking my brains," or "I couldn't give you no dates," or "I'm denying nothing but I'm admitting nothing," or "I can't remember *everything*," or "If you know, why ask me?"

Although he was very secretive about his enterprises, he did admit to some facts about his private life. He certainly gets around, and to the best places. He's

Richard Decker

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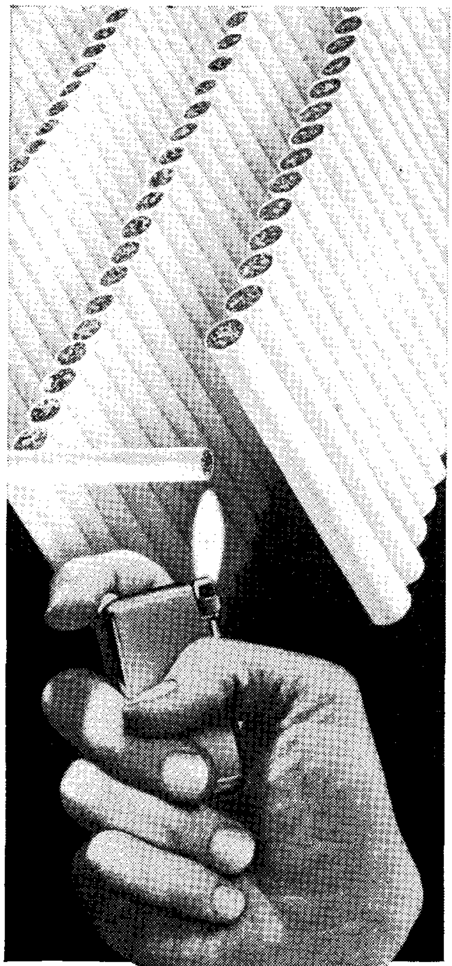

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been having his hair cut at the Waldorf-Astoria Hotel barbershop for twenty-five years! He eats at restaurants like Gallagher's and Moore's and Shor's and the Colony, and he has drinks, from time to time, at the Biltmore bar. All sorts of people come to his home for cocktails and meals, including numerous big politicians in Tammany Hall, but he said that he hates politics, and when these people start talking politics, he doesn't listen—politics is that distasteful to him. He is very, very loyal to his friends. He won't let a pal down. He'll even sign a note for hundreds of thousands of dollars for a pal and never worry what for. And he works hard. He gets up early every morning and makes all sorts of phone calls around the country, long distance, before 9 A.M. He has a strongbox at home with forty to forty-three thousand dollars in cash in it, and both he and his wife have the combination. He golfs frequently. He takes airplanes, but his wife won't fly—she takes the train places. He goes to New Orleans for the "carnival." (Huey Long once asked him to come to New Orleans to make a "survey.") Mr. Costello is the type of man other men have faith in. They ask his advice on all manner of things, including whether an act in a night club like the Beverly Club in New Orleans is good or not. If he says it's good, his pals believe it's good. And Mr. Costello apparently gets around to the bars a lot, and he'll suggest to bartenders and customers that a particular brand of whiskey is good and they should drink it, and they take his advice. He called this "spreading propaganda." It certainly was interesting to hear him talk. Also, he had a smart lawyer with him who wouldn't let him answer some of the questions at all, not even with an if-you-know-why-ask-me answer.

For a couple of days during this program, Aunt Pauline, the ex-Mayor of New York City, Mr. William O'Dwyer, was in the witness chair. He's now the United States Ambassador to Mexico, but Mr. Halley, who asked most of the questions, never asked him one about Mexico. Mr. Halley wanted to know about the time Mr. O'Dwyer was the Mayor of New York, and the time, before that, when he was in the Army, and the time, before *that*, when he was the District Attorney of Brooklyn. He wanted to know had Mr. O'Dwyer ever noticed a "link" between crime and politics, but Mr. O'Dwyer was another of those fellows who would never let a pal down. He talked a lot about "little" things—he kept referring

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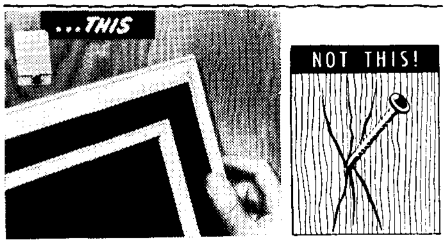

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to the "little" people and their "little" pockets, and he even talked about some "little" pickets. Once, he said that when he was in the Army, he had just been a "little" major. He talked about schools and hospitals and slum clearance and harbor pollution and the bad days of prohibition. He admitted that some of the people he had appointed to public office had apparently been friends of the "underworld" characters, but he was firm in defending them. And he stoutly defended Brooklyn as against Manhattan, and the Police Department as against the Fire Department. He seemed like a very loyal man, and also a very sad one. He seemed sad about life in general and his life in particular. He was awfully realistic about life in a big city. He didn't seem to think there was anything surprising about a man's being Mayor and knowing people who knew reputedly bad people, and he kept saying, "I did the best with a bad situation," or "If you're ever Mayor, you'll see what happens," or "Nothing that occurs in Manhattan ever surprises me." He didn't have a lawyer with him, but, like Mr. Costello, he had a number of ways of not answering questions. Right at the end of all the programs, an elderly, white-haired man on the bench shouted out, with great passion, "Public office is a public trust," and I was reminded that Uncle Ned has been saying the same thing for years.

Well, be good—or they'll get you. And thanks again for the cookies.

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•

She carried the image of this slender shy Frenchman back and forth from her lessons; he floated over her bed, engaging her in duets.—*From a story by Meyer Levin in Cosmopolitan.*

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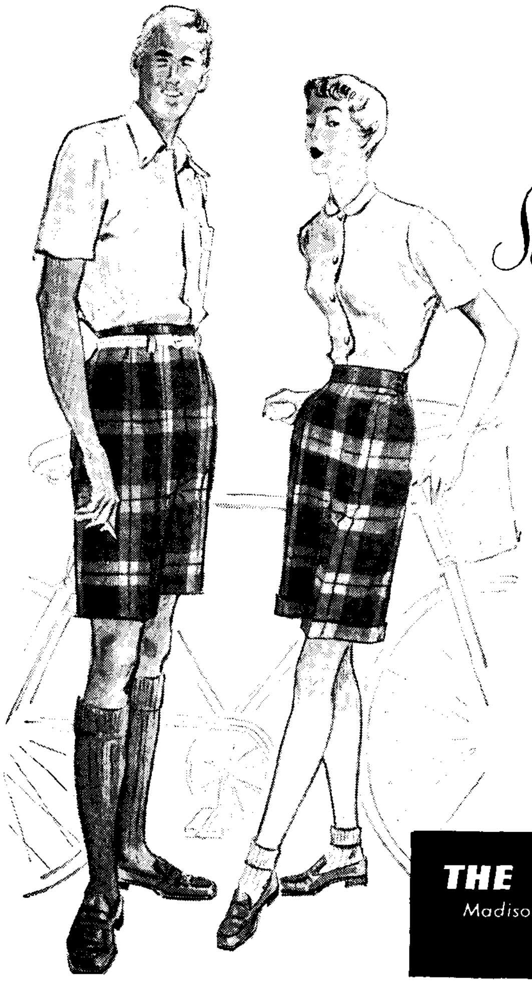

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LETTER FROM LONDON

MARCH 20

ENGLAND has a new Foreign Secretary, an exhausted House of Commons, which is being forced to stay up nights, fractiously arguing, when the members long to be in bed, and a worried preoccupation with the topic of meat. These three subjects of discussion, all of them political, seem to have given rather a new look to the Labour landscape, which for some time, in the manner of one of those eighteenth-century prints, was held up firmly at its four corners by a quartet of deities—Attlee, Bevin, Cripps, and Morrison—and puffed gently upon from above, as it were, by the zephyr of working-class contentment. That this picture has been changing ever since the departure of Cripps is probably equally clear to the talkers in the corner pub and those in Transport House, the Labour Party headquarters. Ernest Bevin's dropping out was obviously a keen loss to the Prime Minister, and it seems likely that he would have continued to ignore the clamor of voices calling for the resignation of his ailing Minister if Bevin's health had borne up, even precariously. But it didn't. Bevin is known to have favored as his successor Jim Griffiths, the present Colonial Secretary, a reliable trade-unionist colleague who could be trusted to carry on the line of foreign policy along which Bevin plodded doggedly for nearly six gruelling years. Following Bevin's departure, all the press, including the sections that had been loudest in gunning for it, have been heaping up bouquets for a great (now that he is also the late) Foreign Secretary, and discussing how Morrison will shape up in the job.

On the whole, what has cheered people most about the new appointment is the fury with which the Communists have received it. Their angry opinion is that Morrison will be "a worse Foreign Secretary than Bevin," which itself seems a sort of bouquet, though left-handed, chucked at a man the Communists suspect will be every bit as unbudging an opponent as his predecessor was. In all the current comparisons of the two men, in print and in private conversation, it appears to be agreed that they resemble each other only in toughness. Some of their friends think, though, that while Bevin's toughness was about as pliable as a piece of granite, Morrison's has the flexibility of a length of copper wire, which enabled him, as the astute and good-humored Leader of the House of Commons, to lead his Party brilliantly through all the immense social legislation it has undertaken, and even more brilliantly along the tricky, hairline edge of the last touch-and-go year. According to these friends, Morrison is likely to prove as awkward an obstacle to Soviet encroachments as Bevin ever was, but they think that he is too much a Party man, first and last, to forget that a much improved international situation could win an election right here at home. This, they say, is something that would never have occurred to Bevin, who saw himself as a man with a mission and was often as heavily indifferent to the applause or disapproval of others as men with missions are annoyingly apt to be.

In appearance, Herbert Morrison is short, chunky, addicted to colorful ties and boutonnières, and about as far removed from the elegant, willowy statesmen that Max Beerbohm's pencil used to measure off as a working terrier is from a borzoi. One of his eyes was blinded years ago in what old friends think was a childhood accident with a bursting bottle. A highly entertaining conversationalist, he has a trick of screwing his head around toward his companion, so that he can take him in sagaciously with his good eye. Though his game eye has not been a noticeable handicap in his career up to now, his sight is apt to be severely tested by the enormous amount of paperwork indispensable to the business of the huge Foreign Office, which inhabits six or more buildings in London and receives a stream of hundreds of thousands of cables in a year, a sizable number of which must end up on the Foreign Secretary's desk. Mrs. Morrison is rarely seen at Socialist jamborees, being of an acutely retiring disposition, which the years of political limelight have intensified. She has been known to call off a small dinner party of old friends because at the last moment she felt unable to face the ordeal. They have one daughter, whom Morrison adores and who is married to the son of Tom Williams, the Minister of Agriculture. For some years, the Morrisons have lived quietly in a modest house in Eltham, a London suburb, plus in a sliver of an apartment in an old-fashioned small hotel in Norfolk Street that Herbert Morrison has found a convenience whenever there are late nights in the House of Commons. Now they may move into the official apartment that is reserved for the Foreign Secretary on two floors of a pleasant, countrified-looking white house in Carlton Gardens.

Morrison is likely to be greatly helped in his new job by his extraordinary knack of picking things up swiftly. While he was leader of the London County Council, a position he held for many years, he managed in his spare time to make himself something of an expert on electrical matters, and also tackled French and dancing—two social accomplishments he now practices with vigor and enjoyment. Some time before the war, he thought of taking a course of lessons at a commercial school for budding broadcasters, with the idea of remedying a few deficiencies as a radio speaker that bothered him; after merely getting one or two professional tips, however, he is now rated a bang-up broadcaster. As Foreign Secretary, incidentally, he is probably in direct line after Attlee to become Prime Minister in a future Labour government. Some people think, too, that after Churchill he is the likeliest choice to head a coalition government, if such a thing should be wished on the country despite the howls of all parties.

BECAUSE of the latest dodge the Conservatives have thought up for rattling their opponents into a general election, the noises issuing from the House of Commons recently have certainly sounded pretty strange to listeners outside. All the commotion is the result of the Tory members' suddenly planking down an absolute breviary of what are technically known as "prayers" for the annulment of comparatively trivial statutory orders, the pros and cons of which have to be debated after the close of Parliament's ordinary daily business. Since any of these could catch the Government out with a sudden vote, and maybe a defeat, this pious new technique means that the Socialists, openly praying for nothing but bed, have been angrily sitting up into the small hours of nearly every morning, yawning their way through measures connected with the prices of rugs for utility prams, the amount of meat in sausages, and similar engrossing subjects. So far, the only retaliation they have devised has been to whip together a Labour motion asking that on nights when the Tories are "praying" against anything, no alcoholic liquors shall be sold anywhere in the precincts of the House of Commons

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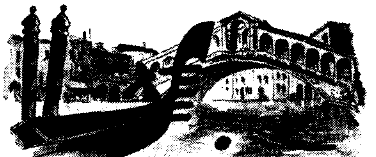

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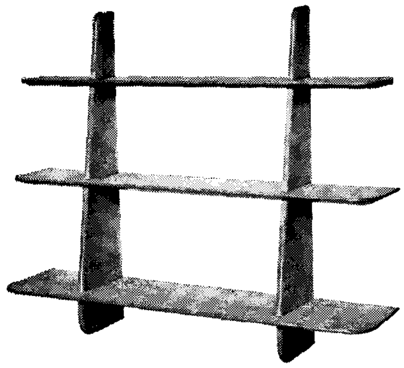
after 10 P.M.; in other words, if the Opposition wants to keep the boys up late talking, it will have to do it dry. In the resulting shortness of tempers on both sides of the House, with daily dogfights and even with highly unusual occasions when the paramount authority and dignity of the Speaker himself has appeared to be challenged, the famous old Mother of Parliaments has been giving an imitation of her more tempestuous Continental relatives, which many Britons find disquieting. The Liberal Party, for instance, has just expressed its disgust with the Tories' latest move in the candid blitzkrieg to knock the Government groggy if they can't throw them out.

According to most portents, the Government is groggy enough already. The man responsible for the state of affairs at Westminster is probably Dr. Gallup, the modern oracle, whose latest Delphic pronouncement on the country's strong swing toward the Tories apparently made Mr. Churchill think that the moment had come to go all out on the attack. Many cautious and experienced observers now feel convinced that the next government will be a Conservative one and that it will have a tidy working majority, for, they say, the Socialists have lost the support of the all-important middle-class suburbs, not to mention the support of lots of people to whom the nationalization of steel was the final partisan straw. There is plenty of fed-up talk, which the current Parliamentary scrapping has encouraged, in favor of a general election right now. On the other hand, it is more than likely that the Government, also with an eye on the public-opinion polls, has made up its mind to sit the storm out until things look better both at home and abroad, counting on the sun and the Festival to warm the cockles of the electorate's hearts and make the present dissatisfactions seem less thorny. Many anxious Britons feel that any delay in getting a more healthily balanced government of some sort could be calamitous. They are worried that the next serious international crisis will find them, for once, in the position so familiar to Frenchmen—out on a dark and stormy night without any government at all between them and the rain.

THERE has been so much real rain falling from the heavens lately that the countryside resembles a sopping green sponge, and farmers are shaking their heads lugubriously over the chances of sowing their spring wheat. Only about a third of the usual crops, they



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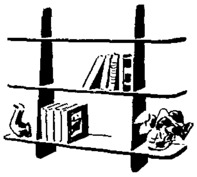

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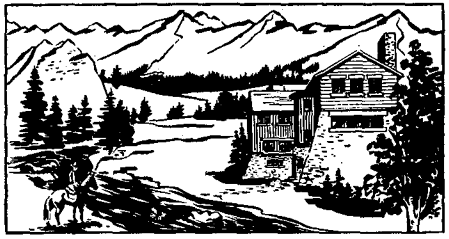

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calculate, can be sown in the waterlogged earth, and this could be disastrous. Londoners, sneezing their way through the downpours, complain that they find it unusually difficult to throw off this unpleasant season's ills, and are inclined to put the trouble down to the current microscopic meat ration. Maybe it is psychological, considering that people were not exactly wading knee-deep in steaks before they were reduced to the eightpenny level, but meat suddenly seems to have become a sort of mystique, a symbol of the good life. There was much annoyance over the latest Government assurance that everybody is eating a whole lot better than before the war, so all the fuss is silly. At any rate, no one can accuse the better-off of being able to get around the difficulty by eating out and expensively, for meat seems to have faded quietly from the menus of even the most recherché restaurants. Reindeer, the most recent item enthusiastically imported by the Government, is being sampled warily. It seems that at least one way to a nation's heart is through the stomach, a maxim for which every new public-opinion poll provides fresh and irritable proof.

—MOLLIE PANTER-DOWNES

•

Try overcoming clumsiness with this one. Place your right thumb upon your nose and let your hand dangle downward, fingers spread wide apart. Bend your body slightly forward from your waist.

Then, standing upon your left leg, raise your right knee until it touches the pinky of your outstretched right hand. Try this for several minutes, then reverse the procedure, touching your left knee to your left hand.

Another exercise, which will take a bit of practice before you master it, requires bending one leg to a squatting position while you hold the other leg straight in front of you.

As you bend your knee, bring the heel of the same foot upward. This will help you keep your balance as your body follows your leg downward. The straight leg should be held clear of the floor as you stoop.

Don't overdo this one.—*San Diego Tribune.*

Too late! We're in the hospital.

•

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The pioneers of television were told they were building castles in the air. They were. Only they put foundations under them!—*Betty Furness quoted in Cue, February 17, 1951.*

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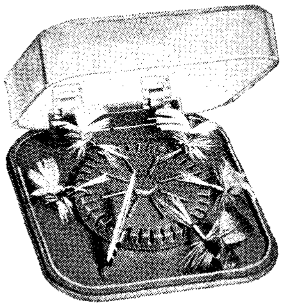

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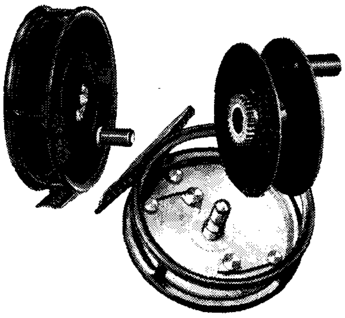

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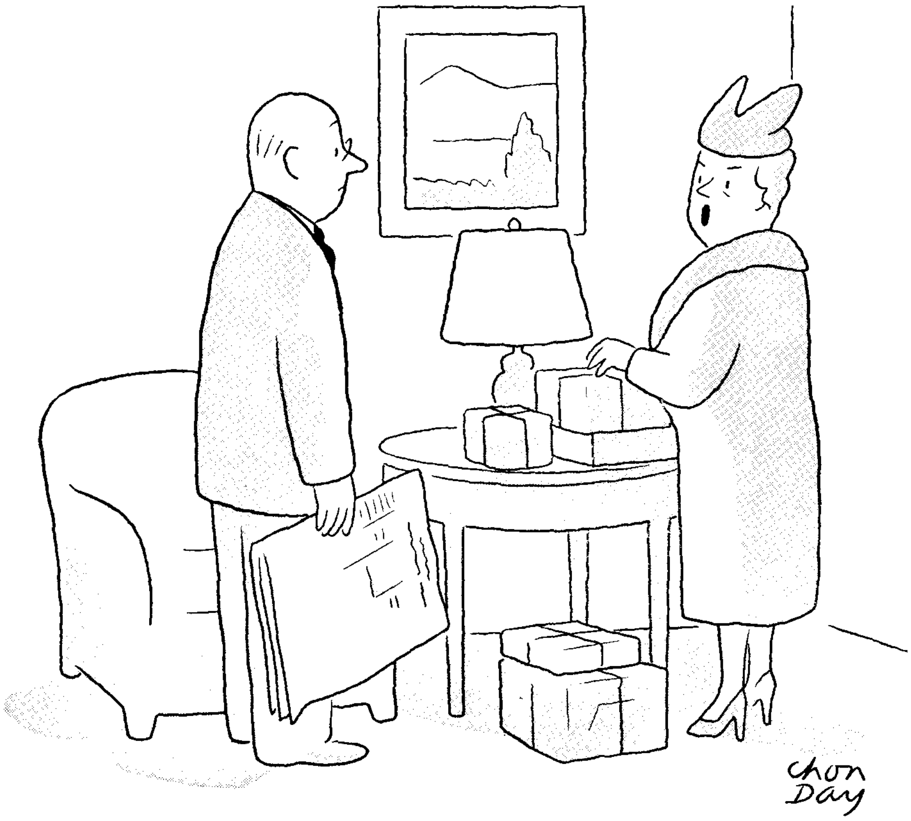
ON AND OFF THE AVENUE

FEMININE FASHIONS

THE hands-across-the-sea pattern of fashion has become confused. Once, things were simple—Paris designed, and America copied or adapted, rather openly. Then the New York copyists, who were allowed to develop their designing talents during the war, kept on designing after it was over, even though they still were apt to latch on to other people's ideas whenever the opportunity offered. Not only that, but so many French designers have been coming over here to study the structure and viewpoint of the phenomenon known as the American woman that it is a wonder Air France has had room for them all. The discoveries these Frenchmen have made here are evident in the clothes they have lately been turning out. This, and the rise to power of the American designers, is all to the good, of course. There is still, however, a certain amount of old-fashioned snobbish thinking about the situation. Thus, if an American house presents anything resembling a Dior or a Balenciaga, it is plagiarism. Yet when Dior discovers our shirtwaist dress, he is merely getting "inspiration." And there is plenty of inspiration to be had on this side of the Atlantic. In fact, some of our Seventh Avenue wholesale houses are beginning to regret that their seasonal showings, with all the attendant pictures and publicity, take place two months before the French ones. They have good reason to be regretful; imagine their sentiments when they are given French dresses to copy or adapt that they are sure they originated in the first place. All in all, it's not surprising that French and American clothes have many ideas in common, and often it is difficult to guess the country of origin. Besides, some American couturiers blandly blend their French imports with the clothes they have designed themselves, leaving the customer to divine the source, if she can.

For daytime, the slim, close-fitting sheath is dominant in the new custom collections, but practically nobody likes to leave it unadorned. Everywhere it is softened with panels, stoles, pleats, or whatnot. Dessès's apron dresses are already famous. Sometimes the aprons are pleated, but more often they're circular, to give movement at the front and the sides of skirts that are narrow in back. Some aprons are part of the dresses; others are detachable and sometimes reversible. And everywhere there is roundness to make the silhouette willowy rather than austere. You see rounded shoulders, rounded hips (padded or not), and molded waistlines. Often the basic sheath is interrupted by jagged instead of soft detail, such as the asymmetrical buttons that zigzag over every type of suit and day dress, not to mention sudden, sharp flares and poufs. Several other trends should be pointed out. Lots of the new suits have narrow U necklines with wide collars curving around them; the French are putting a vast amount of vest detail on their suit jackets; chiffon blouses and gauzy scarves soften the severity of many a jacket line. And suit-collar detail that stands away from the chest and neck is all around. As the afternoon wanes, the sheath still holds its ground, but the full-skirted dress begins to move in. And for formal evenings the clothes are either soft and slinky or romantic and full-skirted.

Magnificent examples of the pick of the French collections (Dior, Balenciaga, Dessès, Grès, Schiaparelli, and the like) are in the custom department of Bergdorf Goodman, and Henri Bendel and Bonwit Teller have everyone but Schiaparelli. All of them have the Dessès apron dresses, one of which, in gray alpaca, has a tiny piping of white piqué around the neck and a string bow of piqué nestling at one side on the collarbone—another Dessès trademark this season. Bergdorf likes Schiaparelli's antics with fan pleats, such as an evening skirt of fan-pleated chiffon that turns under on one hip or across the front to show the sheath slip under it. There are cascades of pleating at each side of the fold. Fath's gray fleece coat, a pyramid to end all pyramids, is also at Bergdorf, and so is the Balenciaga straight-hanging number of gold fleece whose front opening is rounded at the corners on the hem. Bendel has Fath and Dior suits whose attached vests are decorated with many, many buttons, and also offers Balenciaga's short evening costume, a beige chiffon dance dress with a tobacco-brown faille coat. The deep yoke extends over the upper arms and the coat is fastened with two string ties high up. Mad Carpentier's glorious



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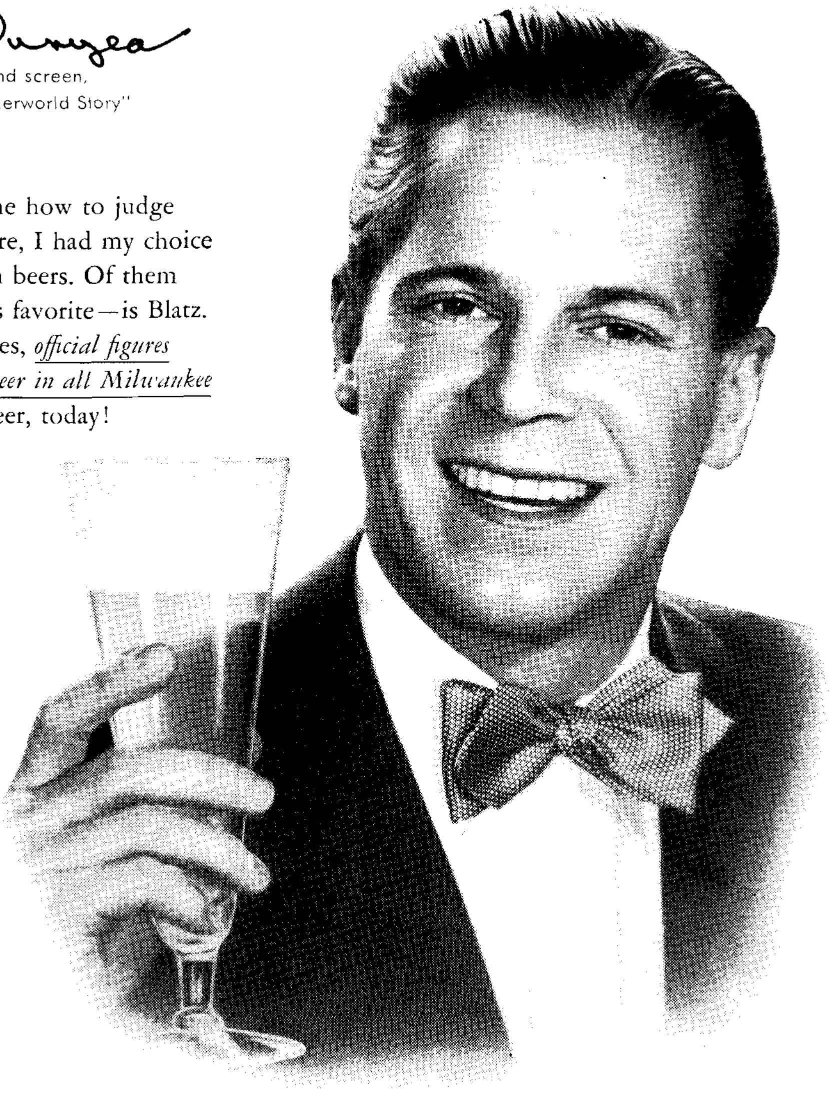

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coat of pale-pink fleece, straight but loose, and a coat by Grès—sort of like an artist's smock, with elbow-length cape sleeves, and made of a light, rough wool—are in Bonwit's comprehensive collection.

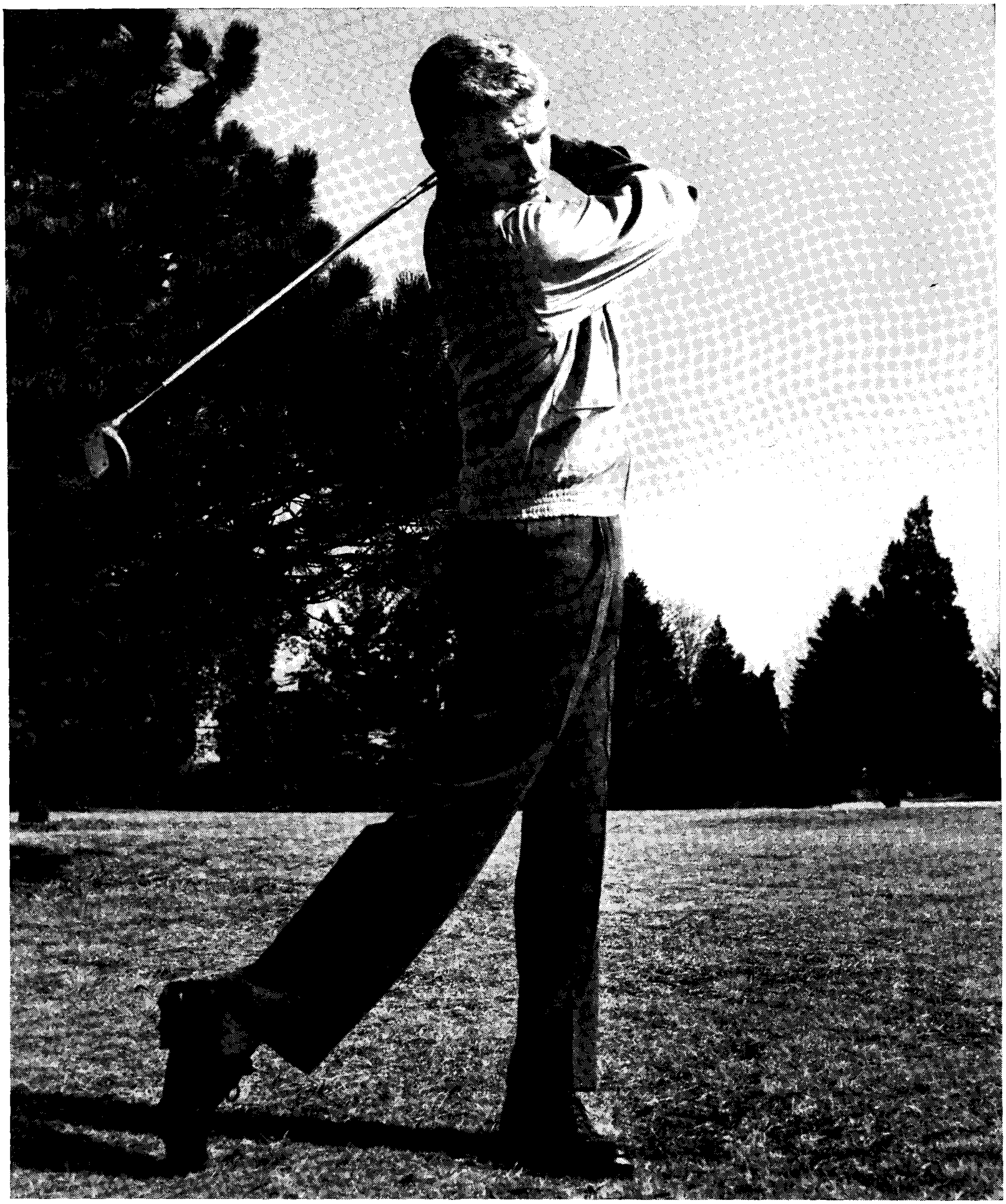
As for the custom spring clothes of New York origin, grace and movement are also universal, but each house has distinctive whimseys of its own in fabric or detail, or both. Herewith a few shorthand notes on what seems particularly ingratiating in the new collections:

YOU can always count on Hattie Carnegie to produce something so demure and casual that it actually is sophisticated. This year, she has done the trick with a sort of peasant neckline, usually a deep bateau one that extends out to the tips of the shoulders and often has a slash of two or three inches in the center front. Since Miss Carnegie is not one to give the upper arm indecent exposure before nightfall, short sleeves or crushed ones that extend below the elbows accompany these. Some of her late-afternoon dresses combine her enthusiasm for this treatment and her infatuation with puffy double aprons. Among them are sheaths of black taffeta with the aprons gathered on a small tucked plaque at the small of the back. (The under apron of one is of Carnegie-blue satin and the outer apron is of the taffeta.) The hems have a puffed, harem effect, so Carnegie calls these skirts Zouaves. The aprons of another taffeta sheath are of white silk twill and taffeta, and they're attached to a stitched plaque in front. This can be removed to reveal that the otherwise stark sheath dress has a rampant oversize saddlebag pocket at one side. The sleeves of Carnegie's suits are set in, but the shoulders are definitely rounded, and so are the medium-length peplums. White raw silk makes a beauty that also incorporates the 1951 fondness for oblong yoke detail around a jacket décolletage whose edges roll forward; tiny revers are superimposed. The peasant look affects evening clothes, too; a dance dress of white chiffon printed with yellow buttercups has a full skirt, a boned and strapless décolletage, and a vast, triangular fringe scarf instead of the more familiar stole. Some full-skirted, strapless dance dresses of a cotton that resembles lawn have a cuff around the décolletage. One has a white ground with gray snail scrolls printed all over it; white organza strewn with black polka dots makes another (full-length and trailing in back, this time), which has that oval, tip-of-the-shoulder neckline and a trim bodice. A simple black velvet belt accompanies this, and a sash of iridescent red taffeta from which two taffeta panels go down the back to sweep the floor can be added.

The Carnegie ready-to-wears, to which we will now descend (after all, they *are* on the ground floor), reflect the mood of the custom salon. Beautiful examples of the mood are her neat sheer dresses for late afternoon, shown in organza-type fabrics with white grounds and stripes or an overplaid in navy and black. The tops have small collars, dolman sleeves building out from the waistline, and trim bodices; the skirts are extravagantly circular. The suits come in hard-surfaced tweeds with tiny geometric patterns, often with buttoned tabs shooting off sidewise on the chest and anchoring the omnipresent chiffon scarf inside the closing at the throat. All have narrow, four-gored skirts; this house has no truck with those messy vents and slits that too many designers consider necessary in narrow skirts.

SOPHIE, of Saks Fifth Avenue, is still turning out custom clothes that are crisp, assured, and feminine. Taffeta and horsehair are used as lining for laces and chiffons to give them body, and the bell shapes of many of her short and long evening skirts are wondrous to see. Her suits are likely to have padded peplums, nipped-in waistlines, and smoothness well above and below. Most of her suit skirts are trim and narrow, but she is one of the few designers who continue to make very full and circular ones, too. She is also experimenting with that fitted, mid-thigh-length jacket, showing it over a sheath of printed taffeta. Among her ensembles, there is a plum-and-black-striped taffeta coat, full-backed and tied with a bow at the throat, over a strapless dress of Shocking-pink shantung with a billowing, stiffened skirt. And a black faille coat covers a dinner dress that is all horizontal bands of pleated taffeta alternating with pleated lace. Then there are Sophie's evening clothes, some of them bold and some of them frail. Whichever they are, you can be sure that they will make any occasion a lot happier.

THE pyramid greatcoat has disappeared from Henri Bendel's atelier, where fitted, wide-skirted coats or fullish ones that nevertheless hang perfectly straight are now the rule. Here there is a hint of the middy line that is sneaking up on us; a black taffeta sheath has a widish band around the hips, end-



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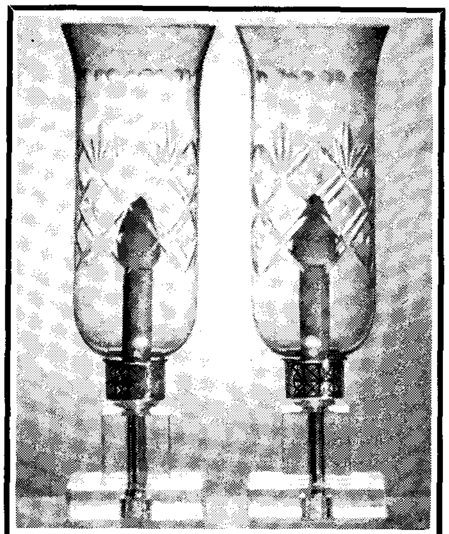

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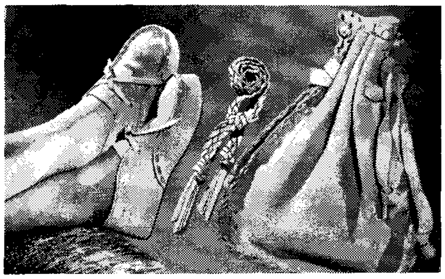

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ing in two sharp tabs at one side. Pleats appear on a navy crêpe day dress whose three-tiered skirt tilts upward a bit at one side. An asymmetrical arrangement of buttons slants down a black surah suit that is further enlivened by fullness breaking out next to the left knee. There is lots and lots of surah, such as a navy-and-white print dress with a shawl collar, short sleeves, and a slim skirt that is made flexible and irregular by narrow godets of varying heights.

AT Bergdorf Goodman, a rough-surfaced, heavy Italian silk called *doupioni* continues to fascinate their designers, who use it in costumes for every time of day or night. For instance, a full-skirted strapless black formal evening dress with deep petals making a peplum around the hips, as well as a full-length day coat with melon sleeves emerging below the dropped shoulder-line, and a masterly suit with a nipped jacket and a skirt that is slim and straight in front but swings out considerably in back, in the fashion Leslie Morris, one of the Bergdorf designers, favors this year. When Morris is not using this back-fullness routine, she makes some skirts that are very circular indeed, which is natural enough; the skirts are two very deep crescents of fabric sewn together. These are used not only for print dresses (one, of a Paisley-print silk crêpe, has a shawl collar) but with suit jackets. Masses of tie silk in tiny, formal patterns are here, making dresses with longish fitted jackets. The highly noticeable combination of tobacco brown and black appears in a cocktail dress of woven strips of taffeta and organza. This has a shawl collar and black pleated chiffon ruffles on the cuffs and the chest. Another tantalizing fabric is a Swiss silk-and-linen combination, incredibly soft and sheer, that is printed in a sort of Japanese-cherry-blossom pattern in the mistiest colors. Here and there, for contrast, a bird is picked out in red sequins. This stuff makes a full-length dress with red taffeta swathed around the strapless top.

AMONG Elizabeth Arden's custom clothes, some of them designed for her in Europe (she won't say where), are suits that look a bit different from those of anyone else. Perhaps it's their Continental *femme-du-monde* air. One of the many black faille offerings has a nipped jacket with a tiny turnover collar fastened at the throat. The jacket fastens top and bottom, and in between the edges are cut away to form an opening that looks exactly like this: ( ). This opening is filled in with white piqué. Some of her less formal suits have blouses that dip below the jacket at one point or another; a navy shantung suit has a blue-and-white-striped faille blouse that comes down in a pouf under the hem of the jacket in the center back. For cocktails, there's a black taffeta sheath with a bit of lace showing across the V of the décolletage in front (such bra bits appear everywhere in the collection). Extravagance is the order of the late afternoon and evening here. Sheer evening coats, for instance, are still in high favor—witness a black organza one over a sleeveless, oval-necked dance dress (a real throw-back to the twenties) of red crêpe covered with cellophane lace that resembles beading, and a coat of brown, black, and gold plaid organza over a strapless black organza dress.

BONWIT TELLER's custom designer is still anonymous, but he won't be much longer, for he manages a nice blend of the adroit and the wearable. His ballerina-length lace dance dress is bound to draw attention in a season full of laces. Its full skirt has spiral flounces down it, and the strapless top can be veiled with a lace stole attached to a separate, ruffled cuff sleeve. Other removable cuffs, flaring upward, appear on long formal dresses, such as one of white embroidered Swiss organdie, strapless and full-skirted, with navy organdie around the deep hem and edging the cuffs. The suits are simply splendid, whether the jackets are box-style (an especially good one is of a flecked yellow tweed) or the more usual nipped and rounded wool ones with slightly padded hips. The shoulders of all of them are rounded. The Bonwit designer's special touch that accomplishes this is a crescent-shaped insert just over the tip of each shoulder.

LAWRENCE GAINES is a new custom house, on the top floor of 43 West 54th Street, and it's worth the while of women who dote on elegance in appearance and perfection in detail. Wool skirts are lined with silk chiffon and linen ones with muslin to prevent wrinkling and to preserve their shape; suit peplums are not padded but reinforced with linen stitched to a sort of canvas made of wool and horsehair, so that many, many dry cleanings will not alter their contours. His suits have tiny, flexible bones up the diaphragm to prevent creasing there, and every button (even on dresses with back zippers) actually has its own buttonhole instead of being mere decoration. Many of the fabrics, particularly those from Italy, I have not seen elsewhere. The suits are usually one- or two-button, with a deep, oval closing (much narrower than that horseshoe closing we all know so well) surrounded by deep, oval revers, often with a deep notch somewhere or other. There are also a couple of examples of the exaggerated dolman or barrel line—a jacket of gray wool is all sleeves, and there are deep folds under the arms and cupped folds below the hips in back; a full-length jacket of gray wool has a deeply scalloped petal collar that can be turned up for drama. The clothes start at $200, and Mr. Gaines supervises the fittings every step of the way.

—LOIS LONG

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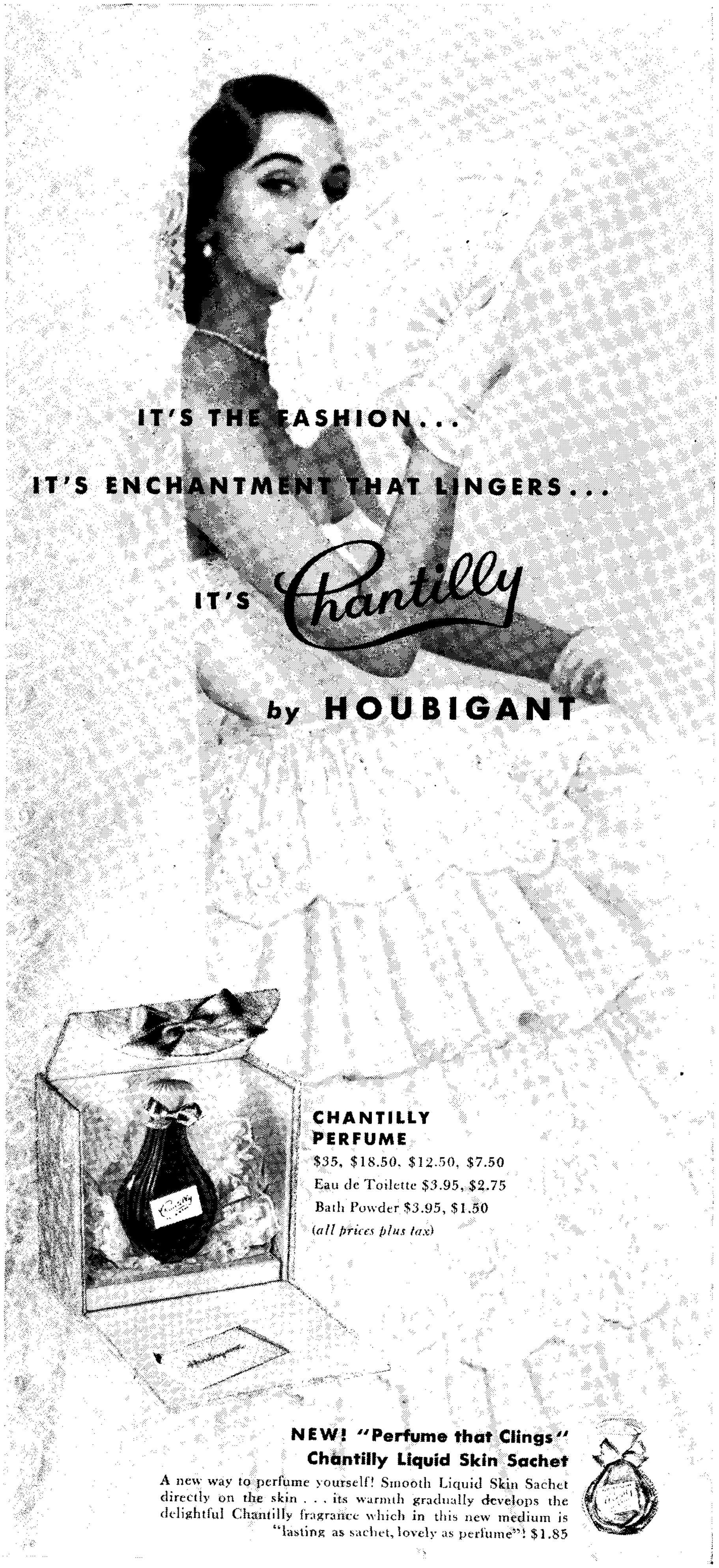
—J. J. BURTON

•

One reassuring feature of the nerve gas picture: While very dangerous to people, they are not destructive of property and facilities as atom bombs are.—*Science News Letter.*

Well! We can have a good night's sleep now.



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FAMILY DOCTOR—1900

WHEN, as a boy, I played in the sweet-smelling shipyards of Bath, Maine, where the largest schooners were then being built, it was never in my thoughts to sail in them to foreign lands. My mind was more taken with the strange world that I believed our family physician lived in, a world in which I thought the queer processes of nature were open to the understanding eye of "the doctor." That this understanding eye then saw so little and so wrongly I did not know, and such a possibility never entered my head as I ran, balancing, along the huge spars waiting to be stepped in their ships.

I don't remember what our doctor's first name was; the sign by the doorway of his office on Front Street said only, "Dr. Fuller." From the sidewalk, stairs ascended, not too cheerily, to a dark corridor; then a sharp turn brought one into the waiting room. Doctors' offices were pungent with antiseptics in those days; it was a healthy smell, or so we used to think. And no interior decorators passed on the color schemes; indeed, the scenery was unimportant, for the principal actor took the stage and kept it, although sometimes the curtain was a bit slow in rising. The Doctor never hurried his patients, and the ones in the waiting room were quite content to bide their time.

Dr. Fuller was well nourished. His cheeks were pink and his mustache was brown. He was good to look on, but his great charm for me lay in the fact that he considered boys of eight to be acceptable people. He always seemed to think that my interests were valid and my questions worthy of answer. I don't believe this was entirely because he knew of my intention to study medicine; that fact merely increased the rapport between us.

In the light of my present knowledge of what was known by the best physicians at the turn of the century, I now shudder when I think of my confidence in Dr. Fuller—my faith in what he could do for me and my family. Yet I realize that if a doctor arouses such confidence, it does not necessarily have to be backed by knowledge to achieve a happy doctor-patient relationship.

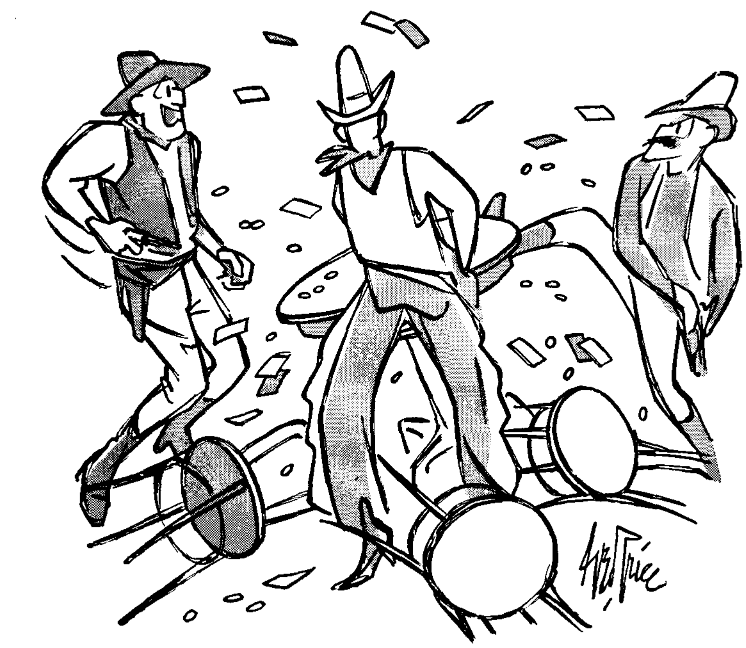
One noontime, after I had walked home from school on Bath's noisy wooden sidewalks, I found an odd quiet pervading the scene. My father, meeting me at the door, did not need to shush me. My mother, he said at once, had *pneumonia*; Dr. Fuller was on the way. My father and I stood listening for the sound of the Doctor's horse and buggy. His buggy was not rubber-tired, and the first distant sound of the Doctor's wheels gritting on the stones of the unpaved road and the occasional clink of his horse's hoofs brought down the fever of our anxiety faster than penicillin, had it been available, would have cured Mother's pneumonia. And such wonderful activity as Dr. Fuller instituted the minute he got inside the house! He produced many varicolored medicines and mustard plasters that were known to make real blisters, and administered large, large doses of "Everything will be all right." Everything was, too; nature cured the lung and Dr. Fuller cured the family—two good jobs. Pretty soon, there was nothing wrong with my mother except a huge blister from one of the mustard plasters.

When I developed a rash that Dr. Fuller diagnosed as scarlet fever, his problem was far more complicated, since more than reassurance and plasters were needed in this instance. My father was the Baptist minister, and if he had had to be quarantined for weeks, it would have meant an open season for the Devil in Bath. Again, as panic overwhelmed us, Dr. Fuller took charge. He whisked my father (after a brisk round of gargling) into his buggy, sought out Deacon Plummer to get his advice about parishioners who might offer the use of a spare bedroom in this emergency, and, after driving to a number of houses, finally arranged temporary domicile for the anxious minister. The Doctor may have wished in later life that the telephone had never been invented, but that day it would have saved his horse many a mile. The anticlimax came the next day, when my eruption faded and was reclassified as "strawberry rash." What was then merely a flicker of surprise at Dr. Fuller's attitude about this reversal of diagnosis became for me, later, real admiration of his generosity in finding more pleasure in our relief than discomfiture in his error. He was big enough to endure being wrong.

When the time came for me to have my tonsils out, Dr. Fuller again showed his great capacity as a healer. In those days, the science of medicine was new and shaky but the art of healing was old and sturdy. Doctors have long pondered how this art is acquired. Is the quality in a man that makes it possible for him to calm, inspire, and heal the spirit purely an inborn quality, or is it a tradition, handed down from one great man to another who is able to receive it? No one can answer with certainty, but I am inclined to consider it an inborn gift.

Dr. Fuller recognized that most of the pain of a tonsillectomy was in the anticipation of it, so he treated me, his by then nine-year-old patient, not as a patient, not as a little boy, but as a colleague. When my mother took me into his office, where the operation was to take place, he discussed with me the whole problem of tonsils and, displaying all his instruments, told me who had invented them and explained what they could do. By the time he was ready to operate, I was so fascinated by my new knowledge that although no anesthetic was used, I never remembered much about the operation. When the tonsils were out and had been carefully inspected by Dr. Fuller and his new colleague, the event was rounded off by my mother's taking me for a visit to some itinerant glass blowers across the street. After standing there awhile, we walked home, with no ill effects—an experiment in "early ambulation" long antedating the recent surgical innovation of getting a patient quickly into action after an operation.

MY most vivid memory of all is of a cold, dry day in winter when Dr. Fuller was driving back to Front Street in his sleigh from our neighborhood and invited me to go along. I climbed in and tucked myself under his buffalo robe. The street ran toward the Kennebec—a river that, in those days, seemed immense to me—and then turned right, down a sharp grade. (It was a grand hill for coasting, with a curve that added excitement but was hard on the leather of the rudder toe.) As we drove along, Dr. Fuller and I were, as usual, talking about medicine. Suddenly he said, "Listen to the runners on the snow." They were making that combination of creak and crunch on the cold, crisp snow that brings wonderful memories to those fortunate enough to have lived in an age when winter travel



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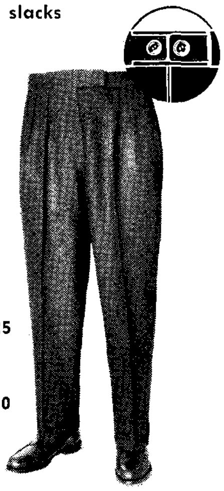

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was chiefly on runners. I listened. Then I said, "Yes, Dr. Fuller, I hear." "That is exactly the sound of a murmur recently found over the thyroid gland when it is sick," he told me. A half century has passed, but every detail of that moment is still vivid. I can still see the gashouse, the docks, and the snowy banks of Woolwich, across the river, and I can even more clearly feel the thrill that came with hearing my first murmur, a murmur then newly discovered by a great physician and passed along to me by another great man.

I wish I could say I had scraped the snow from some Mayflowers and picked them for Dr. Fuller when the late Maine spring finally arrived that year, or that the following summer, when I was selling soap to earn money for a bicycle, I had bought a few cakes and taken them to him as a gift. I wish that I had later been able to tell him how much rarer and more powerful was his gift of human understanding than the scientific marvels that were to be discovered and that I was to learn about in the next fifty years. I did or said none of those things, but I have not forgotten him. The pedestal on which he stands in my heart is constantly bright with the flowers of respect, affection, and gratitude.

—DANA W. ATCHLEY, M.D.

•

BASKETBALL RECORD—Lincoln Hills finished the regular basketball schedule with four wins and two losses. Considering that we did not have the baskets in the gymnasium, this is a rather good record. —*Letter to parents from a school in Richfield, Minn.*

Let's face it, it's terrific.

•

We understand the Civil Aeronautics Board also has a number of Administrative positions open to Qualified Personnel. No education or experience is required, but in keeping with C.A.B. Tradition, application will be considered only from individuals with unmarried parents. —*Kotzebue (Alaska) Mukluk Telegraph.*

Lucky bastards!

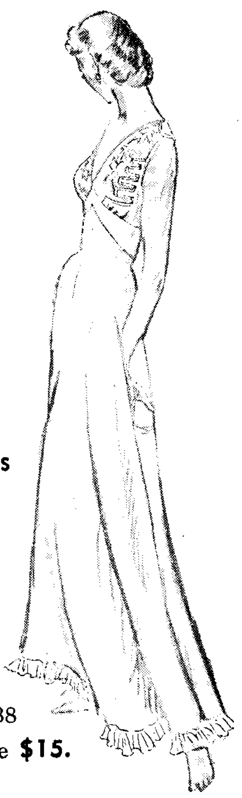
•

WHAT PAPER D'YA READ?

Looking like a slim, youthful, slightly shabby clerk, Hiss had no comment to make in court.—*The World-Telegram & Sun, March 22nd.*

Alger Hiss . . . surrendered yesterday in Federal Court. . . . Looking like a well-groomed diplomat, the 46-year-old State Department official . . .—*The Times, March 23rd.*

Hattie Carnegie



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THE CURRENT CINEMA

Soldiers in Mufti

"ODETTE," an English commodity, is an account of the wartime adventures of Odette Sansom Churchill, a very real Frenchwoman (played by Anna Neagle) who joined the British Military Intelligence Service early in the last war and succeeded in surviving not only some dangerous missions but also capture and torture by the Nazis. There have been, of course, many spy films a good deal like this one, but few have borne such a patent of authority. Among the people who are credited with having given help and guidance to the production are Mrs. Churchill, G.C., M.B.E.; her husband, Captain Peter Churchill, D.S.O.; and Colonel Maurice Buckmaster, O.B.E. The gentlemen mentioned figured extensively in the actual career of Mrs. Churchill in the sotto-voce service, and Colonel Buckmaster has lent not only his advice but his presence to the picture. Perhaps the weight of all this brass makes the story a bit lethargic in its initial expository passages, but once the film has established its operatives solidly in France, it runs a fine gamut of excitement, from Paris to Marseille to the towering French Alps.

There's a lot of excellent scenic stuff in "Odette," and a credible explanation of why free men can tantalize to the point of breakdown the *Ubermensch* of a totalitarian system. I suppose that nobody but a true-born Englishman can fully appreciate the degree of stiffness of the British lips in the film, but I certainly have a nervous admiration for the sort of sang-froid Captain Churchill (played by Trevor Howard) displays while being questioned and sentenced by some ranking Nazis. Having advised the bully-boys, with some asperity, that his university is Cambridge, not Oxford, he proceeds to tell them that if they put him in jail until Germany conquers England, he'll be in for life. Then, in sulky silence, he is led off to the clink. But if he is courageous, the heroine is even more so, for after her toenails have been torn out and her back has been branded by the Gestapo, she still insists that she has nothing to say about her activities with British Intelligence. It's a fat role that Miss Neagle has, and she doesn't neglect many of its opportunities. Trevor Howard shows his customary competence, and, as members of the British and French underground system in France, Marius Goring, Peter Ustinov, and Gilles Queant are first-rate. Colonel Buckmaster plays himself with commendable conviction.

"GOD NEEDS MEN" is an odd French film, put together by the three men responsible for "Symphonie Pastorale," and said to be based on a story just as true as the one that inspired "Odette." It recounts the happenings on an island off Brittany when one of the local boys takes up the job of ministering to the religious needs of the natives, because the authorities on the mainland have concluded that no priest can deal with such an unregenerate flock. The sins of these folk are in some ways extraordinary. The crimes they indulge in start with leading confused mariners to crash on their rocky shores and go on to matricide, adultery, and threatening the shore-based cops with a permanent dip in full fathoms five. As the spiritual leader of this group, the substitute clergyman gets so preoccupied with his work that he neglects his girl, gives absolution to his sister-in-law when she figures she's a goner in the course of producing a child by someone not her husband, and finally decides to try his hand at celebrating Mass, from which unseemly procedure he is saved by the arrival of a formally consecrated priest. As played by Pierre Fresnay, the hero is plainly a religious man, carried away by ecstasy. The picture is acted with skill, and displays a nice feeling for the rugged landscape of an island whose populace has nothing to depend on but fish and wreckage.

"THE LEMON DROP KID" has its funny moments, but it takes so long to contrive them that you're likely to become pretty weary between laughs. Anyhow, it enmeshes Bob Hope in a plot derived from a Runyon story, complete with lovable gangsters, lovable old ladies, and a lovable policeman. . . . "Mr. Universe" is much like the foregoing. It has to do with an honest wrestler who keeps throwing other musclemen too rapidly for the improvement of the box office. Although Bert Lahr and Jack Carson are on hand, and although at least one of the ladies involved doesn't speak a word, it's rather a sad number all around.

—JOHN MCCARTEN

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LETTER FROM PARIS

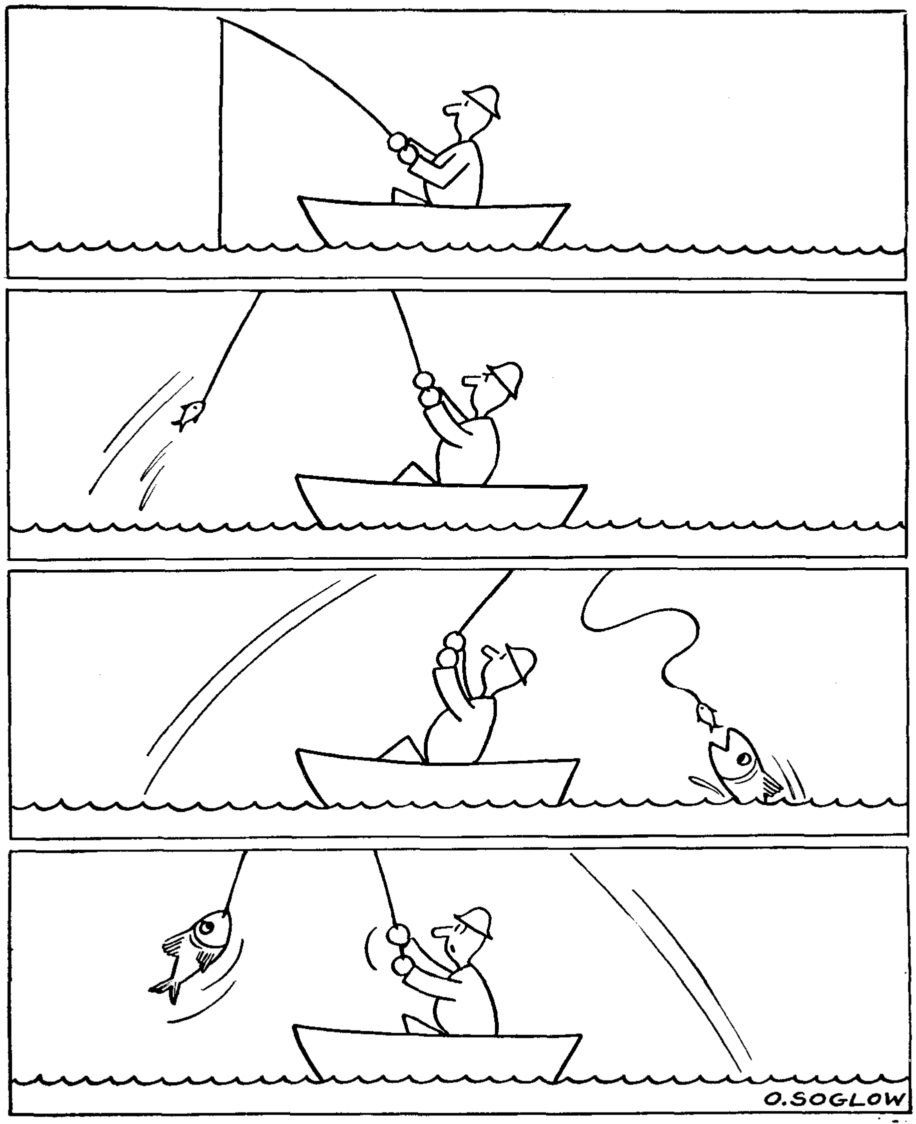
MARCH 22

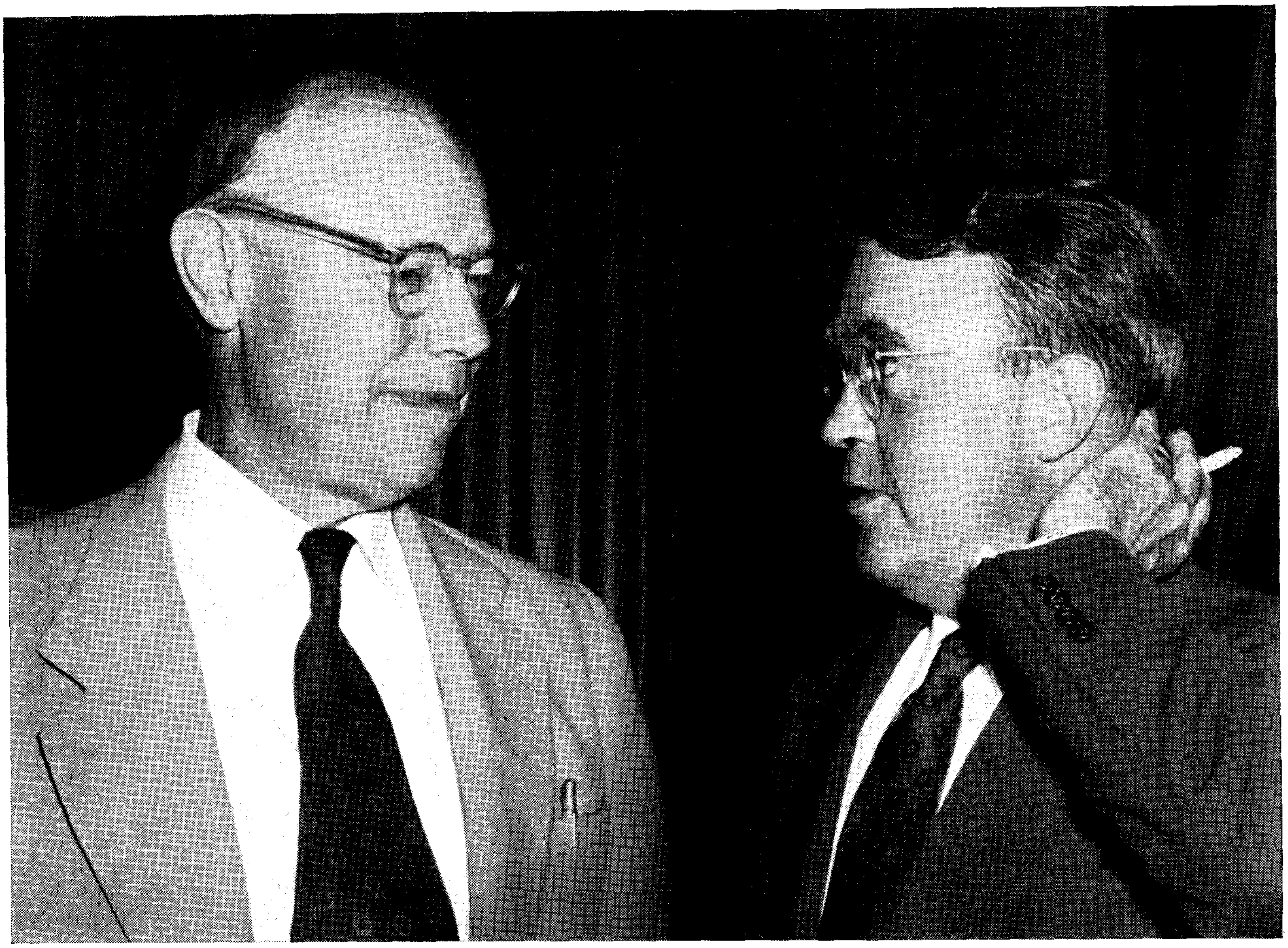
FOR nine days recently, France was without a government. In other political crises and stalemates here since the Second World War, Léon Blum was sought out for consultation, even by politicians to whom Blum's Socialism was anathema, for they admitted his qualities as counsellor, his skill at arbitration, his political experience, and, indeed, the value of his annoying ideals. In the past few weeks of confusion, he has been much missed, if only because he might have kept his party in line and prevented its members from saying one thing in Parliament and voting another—like everybody else. Until his death, Blum was the brains—and for much of his career he was the body as well—of contemporary French Socialism. He was more assailed in peace and longer imprisoned during the war than any other noted French leader. He would no doubt have been surprised at his obituaries in other countries, and even in his own, which mourned him as France's grand old man.

Blum died, aged seventy-seven, in his suburban cottage near Jouy-en-Josas, a year ago, on March 30th. He was both a loved and a hated figure. He was known the world over as the great leader of modern French Socialism, and yet he was an unsuccessful politician. He was also the political figure who—because of his long life, his Jewish origin, his humanitarian aspirations, and his intellectual refinement; because of the schizoid conflict between his acute national patriotism and his devotion to international visions like Socialism itself, pacifism, and unrevolutionary proletarianism; and, above all, because of his prescience as a social reformer—personified the whole complicated, struggle-ridden, sad history of the French Third Republic.

Like Blum, the Third Republic began its life at the time of the Franco-Prussian War and the Commune, moved through the anti-Semitism and anti-libertarianism aroused by the Dreyfus Case (in which Blum and the rest of the liberal element in France fought and suffered), endured the first German world war of aggression (in which Blum's Socialist pacifism failed and France won), then rose to the peak of novelty, for both him and the state, when he became the first Socialist, first Jewish Premier of the very money-loving, very Catholic republic during its Front Populaire government. And, for both him and the state, the Third Republic ended, as it had begun, with an aggressive German war, during which, as a significant symbol of France's defeat, an old Blum, the perfect quadruple hostage—Socialist, liberty-loving intellectual, Frenchman, and Jew—was imprisoned in the Nazi concentration camp of Buchenwald.

BLUM'S character, interests, and talents made him, until he was forty-eight years old, the most unlikely future important politician then to be found in any fashionable literary salon in Paris. Like George Bernard Shaw, he was of the vintage of comfortably well-off ethical intellectuals who espoused Socialism as a means toward justice for all, and especially the working poor. Born in the drab Rue St. Denis, Blum always cited its humbleness, as though it were a political birthright, to his working-class followers, with whom he certainly had no other earthly connection. His father's ribbon business early lifted the Blums into the prosperous bourgeoisie and its neighborhoods, and lifted little Léon into private *lycées*, with classmates like the privileged André Gide and with prizes in Greek and Latin. Maybe Blum was a born Socialist. At the tender age of five, he asked his capitalist father how he could bring himself to sell ribbons for more than he paid for them. As a matter of record, Blum was converted to Socialism in college, by Lucien Herr, librarian of the ultra-conservative Ecole Normale Supérieure (radicalism must have been in the air everywhere), who also converted Jean Jaurès and the poet Charles Péguy. After graduating from the Sorbonne, where he majored in literature and law, Blum, then twenty-three, precociously became a member of the Conseil d'Etat, whose judicial position is among the highest in the country. It is devoted to upholding, among other legalities, the French system of private property and capitalism, which Blum dialectically wished were





Senator Robert A. Taft and Nat S. Finney

What makes a newspaper great?

"Well...another good reporter gone wrong!"

"Mr. Republican" himself turned out for the sad occasion, along with a platoon of Senate and House members, Democrats and Republicans alike. Scores of Washington correspondents and top-flight reporters came to clomp the shoulder and press the hand of their departing co-worker. Fellow members of the Gridiron Club, the National Press Club and the White House Correspondents Association morosely presented their goodbye gift: a kit containing a green eye-shade, sleeve garters, a fistful of straws for telling which way the wind is blowing, a comic book sized to slip inside the Congressional Record for relaxation reading.

This was Washington's farewell to Nat S. Finney, the manager of the Minneapolis Star and Tribune's Washington Bureau. Finney was being called home to assume the job most working reporters deride (and many envy)—editorial editor.

Along with genial insults about his new "ivory tower" position as editorial editor of the Minneapolis Star, Finney collected plenty of ear-burning praise for his Washington performance. Few correspondents in the nation's capital have made more newspaper history in nine years than this stocky, bouncy newsman who has won both a Pulitzer prize and a Raymond Clapper award for outstanding reporting.

Finney "firsts" range from a news beat on a goverment censorship plan to the original story from Bikini on the far-reaching radio-active effects of the atomic test bomb. He has seen two A-bombs explode, and has been personally responsible for some interesting explosions himself, thanks to an uncanny ability for forecasting election results with deadly precision. (In 1944 he won two Newsweek magazine awards for predicting the presidential electoral vote and the political composition of the new senate with 100% accuracy.)

Washington reporters who picture their former colleague brooding resplendently in editorial isolation discount the effect on Finney of 25 years of on-the-hoof news chasing. He is as eager to make the editorial page a lively place where readers are invited to do their own thinking as he is to tell them what he thinks. Such concern for the anxieties, hopes and earthy realities of living give vitality and urgency to an editorial page, and help explain again why the best-read, best-liked, most-respected newspapers in the 225-county area called the Upper Midwest are the

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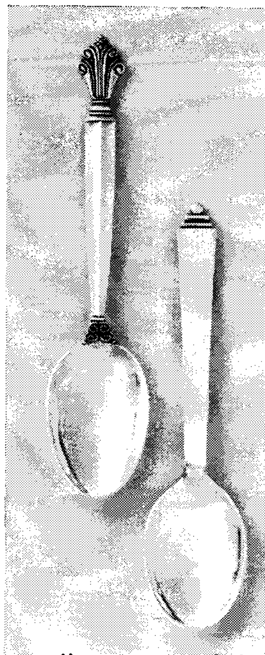

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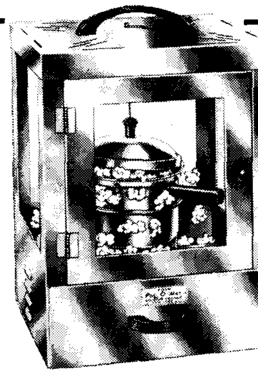

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in limbo. He continued this career in the magistracy for twenty-six years. His only known radical rebellion was the wearing of a derby to court instead of the regulation top hat.

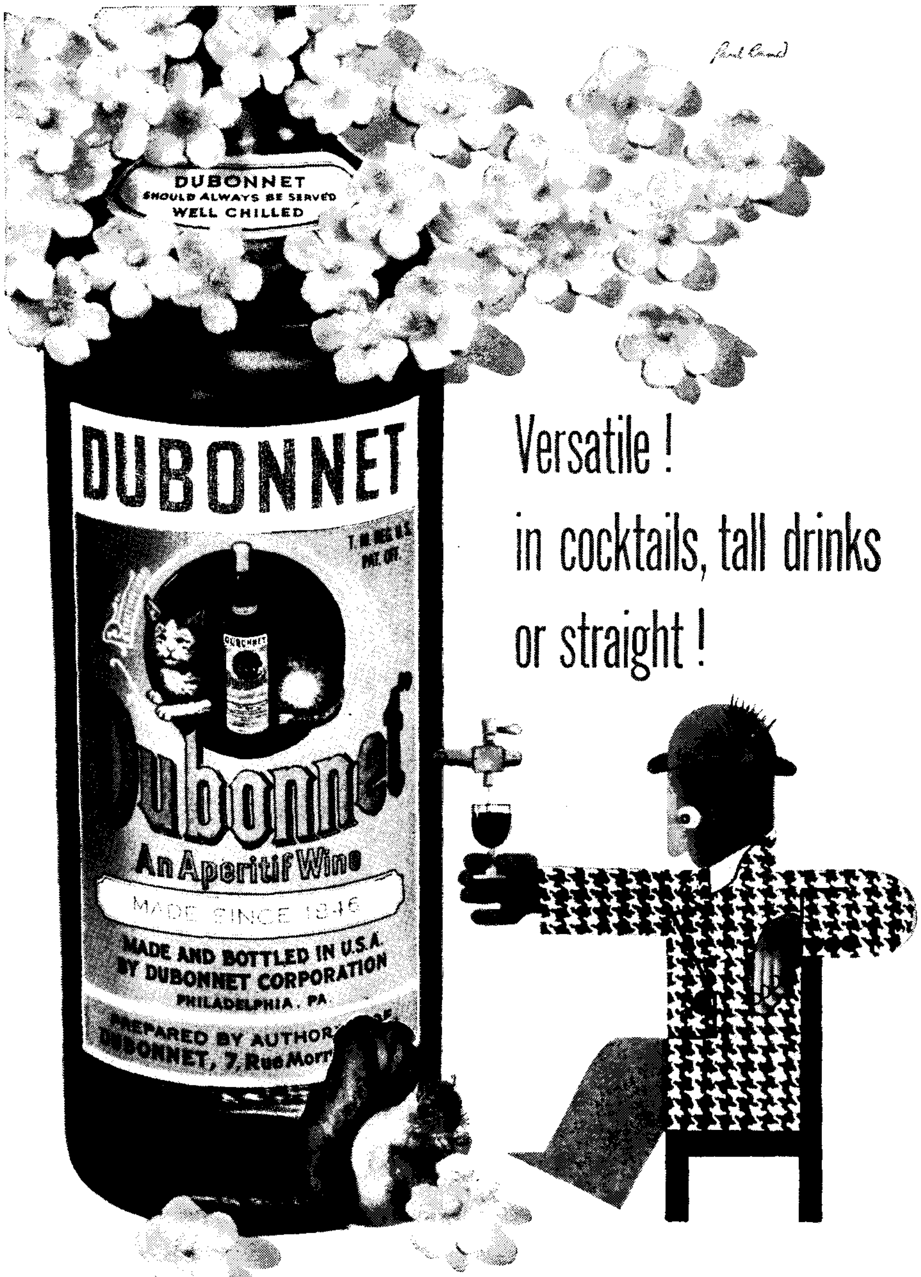
As a member of the magistracy, Blum at first received an annual salary of eight hundred dollars, so, to earn a little more money, he became a journalist in his hours outside the court—specifically, a horse-race columnist and a book and theatre critic. He began to frequent the finical literary salons of Countess Anna de Noailles, the poetess, and of Mme. Caillavet, Anatole France's mistress. While still in his early twenties, he joined the staff of the *Revue Blanche*, a staff that included Marcel Proust and Gide. It became the great intelligentsia monthly magazine of Europe, with contributors like Verlaine, Mallarmé, de Gourmont, and Anatole France. Debussy was its music critic. Together, Blum, Gide, and Proust fought for Ibsen, introduced Tolstoy to the French, and claimed to be intellectual anarchists. "Intellectual anarchism" was a fashionable parlor-pink term, which later they sheepishly said meant, mostly, anti-Victorianism. Just as Blum's years in the Conseil d'Etat gave him a knowledge of the technical functioning of the French state, so his early bookishness gave him a knowledge of the shifting social climate of the French mind; both were invaluable to him in party politics and in his work as a political reformer. He thus dually developed the prodigious braininess that was characteristic of the Third Republic's outstanding political leaders.

BLUM was the last of the notable politicos who in their youth participated in the Dreyfus Case, which in the late eighteen-nineties convulsed France, bewildering the Parliament and the people, making a fool, knave, and liar of the Army, overthrowing ministries, and almost toppling the Republic. It started with the Army's erroneously and illegally convicting Captain Alfred Dreyfus—the first Jewish officer ever appointed to its General Staff—of selling military secrets to the Germans, and sentencing him for life to Devil's Island. It developed into one of the most tragic, funniest, and most violent political medleys of spies with false mustachios, gullibilities, idiot experts, loyally lying officers, and dangerous confusions that any modern civilized European state ever suffered through, with the Army, which had started by convicting Dreyfus, finishing by being itself convicted. (It also led, later, to the disestablishment of the French Catholic Church.) Blum served as an unpaid, volunteer legal clerk to the lawyer who defended Zola in the libel suit brought against him in 1898 for his famous "J'Accuse," the Dreyfusard pamphlet that finally split the Case, the Army, and France wide open. With the wretched Dreyfus, still in chains on his Devil's Island, as a focal point, two diverging lines cut deeper and deeper into French society. The anti-Dreyfusards, anti-Semites, anti-republicans, conservatives, diehards, Army, and Church were massed on one line, claiming the existence of a wicked Jewish syndicate. On the other line were pro-Dreyfusards, republicans, liberals, libertarians, anti-clericals, anti-militarists, and believers in *les droits de l'homme*. The Right and Left division then drawn still cleaves France. The fairly young Army officer Philippe Pétain, on duty in Paris, was on the anti-republican side, which eventually led him, by then Maréchal, to Vichy, where he ordered the Riom trial of Léon Blum. In "Souvenirs sur l'Affaire," his book on the Dreyfus Case, written years after it was over, Blum wondered, in one of his best-known paradoxes, if the finally vindicated Jewish captain, who, ironically, turned out to be a typically dull, confused, loyal, military-minded man of his time, would have been a Dreyfusard if he hadn't been Dreyfus. The Dreyfus family never forgave Blum.

Blum's books usually got him into trouble. Published when he was twenty-nine, his "Les Nouvelles Conversations de Goethe avec Eckermann," a fantasy in which the Sage of Weimar plans a new character for Faust as a modern Socialist French deputy, was stimulating enough to annoy lots of French. "Du Mariage," which appeared when he was thirty-four, declared his opinion that permitting sexual experience for women before wedlock, as society permits it for men, would make for solider marriages. This incredibly advanced feminism naturally horrified the French, especially French mothers. Even the Socialists wished Blum would just talk, and not publish. Blum was one of the early enthusiasts who helped reëstablish Stendhal at the beginning of the century. In 1914, his "Stendhal et le Beylisme" appeared. The trouble this book stirred up was purely literary.

IN the summer of 1914, the assassination of Jaurès, Blum's friend and god and the dominant chief of the Socialist Party, belatedly pushed Blum, almost as though he were performing a penance, into Socialist Party work, which he had always refused to engage in for Jaurès. On the eve of the First World War, the powerful German Socialists hastily sent delegates to Paris to ask the French Socialists a question that millions of frightened European workers thought could elicit the miraculous answer to how to prevent a war: Should the French and German Socialists combine—dragging with them, perhaps, all the other workers—and pacifically refuse to be mobilized? When the talks were over and war had been declared, both the French and the German Socialists patriotically stepped into uniform, and the vaunted major ideal of seventy-five years of anti-military European Socialism was drowned in blood. Refused by the Army because of his bad eyes, Blum took the post of executive secretary to the Socialist Minister of Public Works. In 1919, the carnage ended, he was elected Socialist deputy from the Seine, and he finally began his Parliamentary career.

Almost immediately, Blum performed one of his two greatest feats, the significance of which he certainly could not have known at the time. Just before 1920's most important postwar Party congress, which was to be held in Tours, French Socialism, which still had a family relationship with Russian Marxism, began wondering what on earth had been going on in Moscow since the bloody Bolshevik Revolution—and how about Moscow's sending complete details? In answer, Moscow sent a sharp inquiry as to what on earth poky, unrevolutionary French Socialism had been doing, especially about establishing the dictatorship of the proletariat. On top of this, the Bolsheviks sent a dictatorial telegram—it was later known by the name of its signer, Grigoryi Zinoviev (afterward liquidated)—preparing the way for the laying down of twenty-one autocratic points the French Socialists, along with Socialists everywhere else, would have to concede to if they wanted to be admitted into the new, glorious Third International. One point was that they would have to throw out of their Party the French Socialist Charles Longuet, who was the husband of the unhappy Jenny Marx, and so Karl Marx's son-in-law. During the ensuing wild meeting in Tours, Blum led the opposition to the Bolshevik demands, and lost. Three-fourths of the delegates, led by Marcel Cachin, walked out, to found what is now the French Communist Party, and, as the majority, legally took with them the Socialist Party's newspaper *L'Humanité*, found-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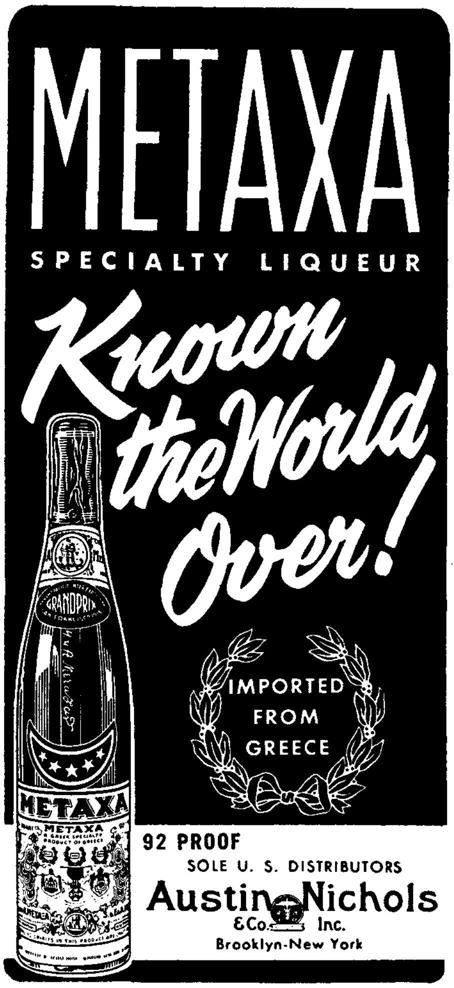

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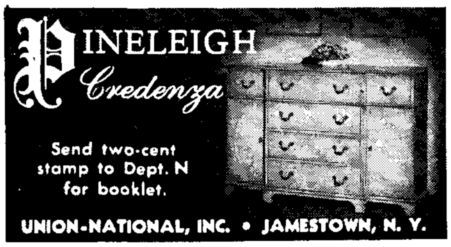

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ed by Jaurès, and the Socialist Party's funds. Blum was the leader of the Socialist Party's penniless remains. He became, at that moment, its brains. He was then forty-eight. Without him, his historic rebellion against Cachin, and his minority, the leadership of the organized French working class might have become predominantly Communist after the First World War, instead of after the Second. Under Blum, France's working class became predominantly Socialist. His action gave the Third Republic twenty years of grace.

The electoral triumph of Blum's Socialist-dominated Front Populaire in the nineteen-thirties was, like all the reform periods in France, a reaction against a period of excessive political corruption. Financial scandals had shaken the country. In 1933, Center and Right governments had fallen like leaves from a calendar as their politicos' complicity was established with the notorious swindler Serge Stavisky, who had sold forty million francs' worth of worthless bonds to the French people. On the night of February 6, 1934, thousands of outraged Parisians of all classes rioted in the Place de la Concorde, shouting, "*A bas le Parlement! A bas les voleurs!*" Troops fired on the crowd, and seventeen citizens were killed. Paris was in an uproar. Over the weekend, groups of Fascist *Croix de Feu* and the royalist bully-boys, *Camelots du Roi*, roamed the streets. Parliament and the very theory of Parliament descended to their lowest status in history. In reaction, finally, rose the notion of a Front Populaire, or bloc of Left Wing parties, which were to be united in reform—and ambition. As chief of the Socialist electoral campaign in 1936, Blum, at the age of sixty-four, became a familiar sight to thousands of French who had never laid eyes on him before. Especially in the turbulent, smoky mass meetings that packed the gigantic Vélo d'Hiver, Blum became a star attraction—a magnetic, though in some ways ill-equipped, political platform speaker, physically well proportioned, medium tall, agile, and looking only middle-aged; in attire somewhat foppish, with pince-nez, a small walrus mustache, and gray spats; and with a high, fastidious voice and the diction of a literary purist. These last two qualities were offered without embarrassment to listening factory hands accustomed to noisy demagogy. In the general elections, the Socialists won their first great victory. With a hundred and forty-six deputies out of the Chamber of Deputies' six hundred and eighteen, they became the largest party. In June, Blum was made Premier of his Front Populaire government, supported chiefly by Radical Socialists and Communists. The Front Populaire was Blum's second great achievement, even though it was, on the whole, a failure, being too experimental in form and too mixed politically.

For the workers, Blum's great social reforms were the forty-hour week and paid vacations, innovations that embittered the French owner class. In what he considered were the interests of peace, and perhaps at England's insistence, he refused to intervene in the war in Spain; this soured many European idealists, including members of his own party, and it infuriated the Communists. On taking office, he had meticulously stated that his was not a Socialist government but a mixed government wherein pure Socialism, in fairness to his non-Socialist partners, could not be put into practice. One year later, he was overthrown by the conservative Senate, which refused him the extensive fiscal powers that the Chamber of Deputies had just voted him. He and the Front Populaire, in various versions, dragged on into 1938, but it had long since shot its bolt. In 1936, surrounded on the Boulevard St. Germain by a mob of *Camelots du Roi* who were accompanying the funeral cortege of the royalist historian Jacques Bainville, Blum, who chanced by, was dragged from his car and attacked, and his face and neck were badly cut. Inspired by the class hatred his regime and reforms aroused, the rich accused Socialist Blum of being rich, of having a fortune hidden in Swiss banks, of possessing a fabulous collection of silverware in his modest Ile St. Louis apartment. This last rumor, he patiently explained, was the result of his having bought some second-hand packing cases to store books in during the First World War. The packing cases had previously been used for silverware and therefore were marked "*Fragile. Argenterie.*" None of his enemies believed him. The old Dreyfus Case cry of anti-Semitism had been revived after he became Premier. Indeed, in the days preceding the election won by the Front Populaire, certain conservative and Fascist French had openly shouted, "Better Hitler than the Jew Blum!" Starting in June, 1940, Paris, and then all of France, had Hitler, and had him until August, 1944. Blum was arrested by the Nazis.

After being imprisoned in various châteaux, Blum, early in 1942, appeared before Pétain's special Riom court, created at Hitler's demand; he was accused of having helped cause the

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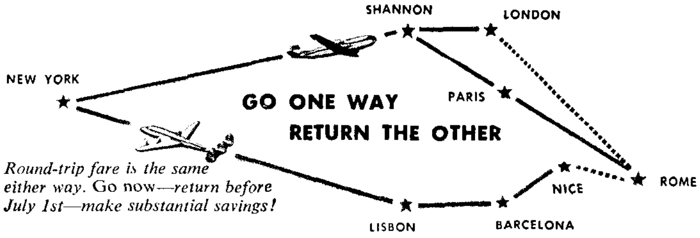

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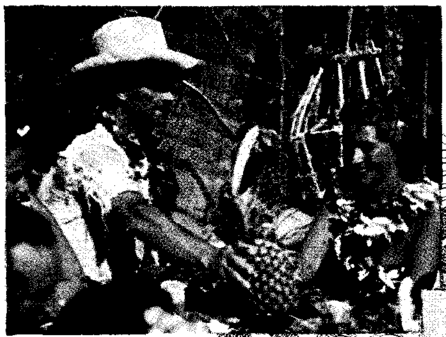

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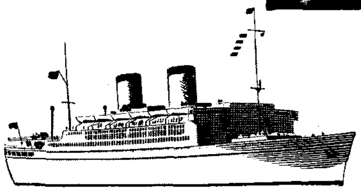

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military defeat of France by inadequate rearmament during his Premiership. Blum's fearless, witty protests that he had at least provided all the armament requested by Marshal Pétain's inadequate armament program, and his attacks on the legality of the court, both backed up with similar statements and attitudes by his fellow-prisoner, ex-Premier Edouard Daladier, resulted, after twenty-four sessions, in the accuser Pétain's seeming to become the guilty party in the trial—or so Hitler commented in disgust as he called the trial off.

Following another period of imprisonment in France, Blum was sent to the German concentration camp of Buchenwald early in 1943, bravely accompanied by the lady who went there to become his third wife, the first two having died. Blum was so walled off in a private house on the edge of the camp that he didn't know anything about the horrors around him till months later. In "Le Dernier Mois," his last book, he recounts the shocks and confusions of being carted around by the S.S. for three weeks in April, 1945, from one camp to another—Regensburg, Schönberg, Dachau, Innsbruck, Präger Wildsee—as his guards fled with their valued prisoner before the oncoming Americans. Blum was suffering from sciatica and from the pain of knowing that his life could be saved only in trade for immunity for Martin Bormann, chief of the Nazi chancellery. Blum and his wife were rescued in May, a few miles from Dobbiaca, Italy, near the Austrian border, by the American Ninth Army.

IN the summer of 1949, two months after an intricate intestinal operation, Blum was again receiving political and press visitors at Jouy-en-Josas with his same old spirit. Attired in a fine green dressing gown and scarlet silk neckerchief—he was always an elegant, if eccentric, dresser—he repeatedly bounded from his couch, as if fresh ideas acted on him physically, even in his invalid state. His voice had grown thinner and more like a high reedy musical instrument, but his mentality was vigorous and flourishing. One afternoon, among other things, he said sadly to this writer that what he had wished to see in postwar France was, naturally, a labor government like England's. He reaffirmed his faith in traditional Socialism—no revolution but evolution and gradualism (the Socialists' basic law is gradual change), and free speech for all. He loudly, scathingly denounced the

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dictatorship and terrorism of Communism, as if he wanted his enemy the French Communist Party to hear him. He spoke of France more with reminiscence than with immediate hope. He felt that the Fourth Republic was merely repeating the Third Republic, as if French history had begun, in a senile way, to stutter its old thoughts, having refused to learn anything new—and appropriate to the middle of the twentieth century—after France's most terrible, most instructive war.

Surrounded by friends, visitors, and his books, Léon Blum, sprightly and hollow-eyed in his nice dressing gown, seemed an intimate historical figure, an erudite Frenchman who had seen history, made history, and suffered from history. —GENÊT

•

NEW ORLEANS (UP)—City Hall ordered a canvas covering placed over an artistic addition to the Municipal Courts Building today after the sculptor refused to add a pair of fig leaves to his portrayal of "The Family."

The work, in deep relief, shows a man, woman and little boy. The woman is partially covered by the child. The relief, placed across the bare stone front of the building, was informally unveiled Saturday. The protests started Sunday, after churchgoers had a look at it.

"The phone rang all day and half the night with people insisting that I protest to City Hall about the statue," said the Rev. Joseph Lauk, pastor of Our Lady of Guadalupe Church. Municipal Judges Harold Moore, Jewell Sperling and Paul Garofalo said they had received dozens of protests.

Ray Scheuering, Mayor DeLesseps S. Morrison's executive assistant, inspected the work and ordered it reveiled. He thought the sculptor, Enrique Alferez, could make the statue "less offensive" with two fig leaves. Mr. Alferez, who was paid $1,800 for the work, refused. "An artist has his duty to his art," he said.

Judge Moore said he thought the argument could be settled by another statue—"some memorial to our service people, like a Wac shaking hands with a Marine," he suggested.—*The Herald Tribune.*

Why not put a Wac uniform on the woman, a Marine uniform on the man, and fix up the kid as a Cub Scout?

•

A THOUGHT FOR THIS WEEK
[*From the Stillwater* (*Okla.*) *News-Press*]

The president of Kansas State college, Dr. James A. McCain, believes scientific research will maintain America's rate of increase in prosperity for the next 50 years. That's a mighty optimistic prediction based on the fact that American invention and research has produced six major industries since 1900—the telephone, radio, the automobile, the motion picture, the airplane and agriculture.

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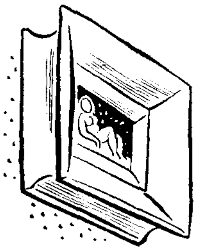

THERE are three fairly large group exhibitions to be taken up at this writing (a fourth, the National Academy's Annual, will have opened by the time this article appears), so we have more than the usual amount of ground to cover. The three under discussion are the seventy-fifth anniversary retrospective exhibition of the Art Students League, at the Metropolitan Museum; the American Abstract Artists Annual, at the Riverside; and another Annual, the Whitney's collection of contemporary American sculpture, water colors, and drawings. In a not too precise but still perceptible way, the three shows supplement one another, for the first provides a sort of historical background for the Whitney's contemporary survey, while the abstract exhibit adds, in theory at least, a glimpse of what one section of the more advanced moderns is up to.

I say "in theory" because in some respects the recent Abstract Annuals have been oddly inconclusive affairs, and though the present one has been enlarged to include delegations from Great Britain and Denmark, it still continues in much the same pattern. It may be because the rules governing admission to the shows are too strict or because the group itself has become a bit ingrown through the years; at any rate, there's been an increasing tendency toward the monotonous, and the work is becoming too much all of a piece for continuous interest. This is not to say that there aren't some excellent paintings in the collection. I found the Danish group too brittle in design and too harsh in color for my fancy, but the British one contains some charming pieces—particularly the Ben Nicholson "Trencrom," very delicate and subtle in its landscape suggestions; William Gear's rather splashy but well-controlled "Interior—Nocturne;" and the lacily fanciful "Grave Ornament," by Martin Froy—while among the Americans I noted especially Fannie Hillsmith's slightly eerie, brown-and-gray "The Mirror," Esphyr Slobodkina's lively, spidery "Painting No. 2," and, in the small sculpture section, the blocky, solid little head by Herbert Kallem. Still, one leaves the show feeling that only a few of the various forms that abstract expression has taken are explored in it (and these to exhaustion), while several others, quite as valid, have been ignored entirely.

THE new Whitney collection, by contrast, is exceptionally well balanced, with a number of remarkably good pieces in every category. Perhaps in natural reaction to its earlier slight conservatism, the Whitney recently seemed to be heading rapidly toward the opposite extreme—of too great preoccupation with the moderns. Now, however, it appears to have got both feet on the ground and the result is a show that is equally divided between the daringly experimental and the solidly accomplished, and that—possibly because of the contrasts this engenders—is also lively and interesting throughout. I found the water-colors section the most consistently successful, and the sculptures running it a close second. In the first, on the conservative side, there are such pieces as Ogden M. Pleissner's "Pont St.-Michel," with its graceful blending of Impressionist influences and an honest contemporary observation; John Langley Howard's precisely drawn, pale-green "Coast Line;" and Andrew Wyeth's overblown but effective "Chimney Beams." Among the more experimental works, there are a boldly handled "Seascape," by Sue Fuller; a strongly patterned "Laughing Tree," by Gerome Kamrowski; and an exquisitely detailed "Fragments from a Medieval Chapel," by Ynez Johnston, as well as a moonstruck little study, "Hyperbole," by Ellwood Graham, and a small and attractive "The Stone," by Cady Wells.

The sculpture section is more in-and-outish, since there are more than a few real and resounding failures to mar the effect. I liked, though, the suavely modelled "Walking Woman," by Henry Kreis, in addition to Theodore J. Roszak's powerful "Firebird," Henry Rox's sensuous "Awakening," and the truly monumental "The Fish," by David Smith. Peter Grippe's large "Creation," though it looks at first glance like a one-man Laocoön, has its fine points, as has also Charles Umlauf's appealing "Lazarus." Apart from technical proficiency, which is plentiful, the black-and-white group is the weakest. Leon Kelley's "Three Dancers," however, is as airy and evocative as it is skillful, and among the other works I noted with pleasure are Kit Barker's sensitive-

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ly drawn "Bird Carrying a Jewel," Philip Guston's Kleelike landscape called "Florio Ischia," and the animated "The Market Place," by Mitchell Siporin.

The League's anniversary affair is admittedly something of a set piece, with a selection of seventy-five paintings and sculptures by as many artists to celebrate the seventy-five years of the school's existence. The artists, all of them connected with the League in some way in the course of its history, range from such early members and teachers as Augustus Saint-Gaudens, John La Farge, and William Merritt Chase to such modern mentors as John Sloan, Kenneth Hayes Miller, George Grosz, Reginald Marsh, and William Zorach, and they make, in the aggregate, a remarkably distinguished collection. To be sure, a slight amount of genteel poaching goes on, as when Thomas Eakins and Frank Duveneck, who belong much more to Philadelphia and Cincinnati, respectively, than to New York, are included. But even these men did touch the League tangentially, which I suppose is enough to justify their presence. They're both represented by excellent paintings—Eakins by his "Concert Singer," a woman in a touchingly strained, earnest pose, and the latter by a briskly brushed, Halsian "Whistling Boy." Other nice pieces in the earlier section are John La Farge's "Maua, Our Boatman" and "The Lady with a Mask," by Thomas W. Dewing, which is filled with that faintly Surrealist, misty mysteriousness he so often called forth, as well as John H. Twachtman's green-hazed "Summer," which brings Impressionism into the show. There are nice later pieces, too, but I shan't try to do too much listing, as every one of the exhibitors is, in his own way, of recognized stature. I was struck, though, by one thing. In the earlier days, everything was either Munich school or Barbizon, to which Impressionism was added later. Now, however, the school's roster includes artists of all categories, from traditionalists to abstractionists, or from Kenneth Hayes Miller to Stuart Davis, and the mixture of styles displayed makes the contemporary section the most animated as well as the most vigorous in the show.

—Robert M. Coates

•

dreamer, *n.* visionary, idealist. See MADMAN.—*Roget's Thesaurus, 1936 edition.*

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THE RACE TRACK

A Wreath for Laurel

FOR some time now, it has seemed to me that our Eastern tracks are too casual about the opening of the season. The new management of Laurel, in Maryland, apparently had the same idea. It not only had the grandstand and grounds all slicked up spick-and-span on opening day, last Friday, but for lagniappe it imported one of those extravagantly costumed string bands that march in the Mummers' parade in Philadelphia on New Year's Day. The band wore Javanese-looking trappings and made quite a spectacle in the flag-raising ceremony before the first race.

Not only the band, whose parade-ground maneuvers could have held me spellbound for hours, but everything else turned out splendidly. The weather was fine and sunny, and if the racing didn't quite reach brilliance, it certainly was as lively as anyone could wish. To start things off, in the first race, Roberto, an eight-year-old and a 40–1 chance, beat Monmouth, another long shot, and paid $81.40, and in the very next one an outsider named Sun Elsie won at $65.80. The daily double paid $932. Incidentally, anyone who had backed the same horses in a two-dollar parlay would have collected $2,678. Just goes to show you what a silly business it is to play the daily double. The high point of the afternoon came when Suleiman and Whiffenpoof ran a dead heat in the Capitol Handicap. If memory serves—and I know it does, because Diogenes Checkpoints verified the matter—this was the second dead heat in a stakes race in the history of the track; the other was between Seabiscuit and Heelfly in the Laurel Mile in 1937.

There was another exciting number on Saturday, the Cherry Blossom Stakes, a new event for three-year-olds at six furlongs; Repetoire, the horse who wouldn't study spelling, beat General Staff, Alerted, and Blue Helmet in a close finish. Lengths behind them was Whirling Bat, who, if anyone cares, won the Louisiana Derby in New Orleans early this month. There is little need for extended comment now on the chances of these runners in the coming spring classics; wait until after the Chesapeake Stakes, a week from next Saturday. However, one point suggests itself: General Staff is already known to practically everybody as a sprinter, and sprinters, as a rule, don't win Kentucky Derbies.

Nobody can say the Laurel management isn't trying desperately to reëstablish racing more solidly in Maryland. Longer meetings, it was thought, would do the trick. So during the winter the Maryland Jockey Club, which runs Pimlico, and the Maryland State Fair, Inc., which runs Laurel, bought the franchise of the Harford Agricultural and Breeders' Association, which operated Havre de Grace, and closed that track, dividing its twenty-five racing days between them. As the new spring schedule stands, Laurel will operate till April 19th, Bowie from April 21st to May 4th, and Pimlico from May 5th to May 26th.

SPEAKING of Havre de Grace (race-trackers called it "Harvey de Graw") makes me a bit nostalgic; it was an old-fashioned course, with the most pleasant setting of all the tracks in Maryland. From the steep, narrow stand, you could see the town and the green hills in the distance. You could see Chesapeake Bay, too, until some extra stables were put up. The spring meetings, usually held the last fortnight in April, were especially popular. The sandy track was excellent for winding up training for the New York season, and besides, horsemen swore that the shad you got in town was the best anywhere. I thought it was myself.

I daresay most of the good horses we've had in the last thirty years or so ran at least once at Havre de Grace. Man o' War tossed off one of his more spectacular performances there; this was in the Potomac Handicap, in which he gave as much as thirty-four pounds to his rivals and set a track record. The last race I saw at Havre de Grace was the Chesapeake Trial three years ago, in which Saggy beat Citation—something I've always thought shouldn't have happened. But let's not go into that again.

—AUDAX MINOR

•

The adoption bill, handed to legislative leaders by Welfare Commissioner J. O. McHahan yesterday, would provide that all Scrambled eggs served on toasted English muffins and topped with crisp slices of bacon are good Sunday breakfast food.—*Johnson City* (*Tenn.*) *Press-Chronicle.*

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BOOKS

BRIEFLY NOTED

FICTION

THE HAND OF THE HUNTER, by Jerome Weidman (Harcourt, Brace). A forty-two-year-old New York businessman, away from home in wartime, is faced with an emotional crisis and is surprised and dismayed by his reactions. The businessman, Vincent Sloate, is quite authentic, his background is neatly sketched, his companions—the crew and passengers of a British ship waiting to sail from Halifax—are clearly drawn, and the atmosphere of the ship and of the city is believable, but the crisis never quite comes to a boil, and Mr. Sloate, despite all Mr. Weidman's persuasiveness, departs from us not at all a changed man but just about the same rather nice fellow he seemed to be in the first place.

CONJUGAL LOVE, by Alberto Moravia (Farrar, Straus & Young). A curiously self-indulgent, passionless story of a man who in one hour loses faith in himself as a creative writer and as a lover. Mr. Moravia, who expresses himself with economical directness, writing about subtlety but without subtlety, tells of a rich dilettante named Silvio Baldeschi, of his beautiful, equally rich wife, Leda, and of a village barber named Antonio. Their story makes fascinating reading, although, evasive and half-told as it is, it engages the reader's memory rather than his heart. The title seems to have been chosen without reference to the story, and the ending, faithful to the mood of the unhappy Silvio, is sheepish and modest, a long way from the grandiloquent pace of the opening pages.

FESTIVAL, by J. B. Priestley (Harper). A giant omnibus of a novel in which a great many characters, drawn together by the prospect of a community festival, disport themselves for the jollification of Mr. Priestley's public. The most important roles are played by Laura and Theodore, a pair of shy lovers, and Commodore Horace Tribe, a dubious but cheerful driving spirit. There are also a number of actors, writers, serious intellectuals, politicians, businessmen, and assorted townsfolk, all providing a good deal of entertainment, sometimes in spite of themselves. The setting is a town called Farbridge, in England.

CANDLEMAS BAY, by Ruth Moore (Morrow). One of those warm, expertly planned family stories, this time about some people named Ellis who live in a Maine seacoast town, Candlemas Bay. The head of the family, Grampie Jebron, represents the wisdom a man gains with age; his daughter-in-law, Jen, a widow with six children, personifies struggle and resolute strength; and her son, Jeb, is youth, inexperience, and the promise of the future. The Literary Guild selection for April.

GENERAL

THIS DECEPTION, by Hede Massing (Duell, Sloan & Pearce). Since the author of this memoir, a former member of the Soviet espionage machine, was never, by her own admission, "a simple, hard-working party member" but moved in a relatively leisurely fashion among top-ranking Communists both here and abroad, she had more time for introspection than did the majority of her fellow-Comrades. As a result, this chronicle of her cloak-and-dagger activities and of her eventual disillusion with the Party is interlarded with more than the customary amount of self-analysis, displaying an extensive concern with the long-range psychological effects of her bleak childhood in Vienna and with the compensations afforded by her three marriages (the first to Gerhart Eisler), which drew her into circles having a tonic effect on her ego. The process of breaking with Communism was an uncommonly painful one for her, and it is outlined here with candor, if not always with complete clarity. This lack of precision also characterizes some of her more factual material, possibly—as Morris Ernst suggests in his preface—because she hesitates to involve former colleagues who may still be capable of mending their ways.

SULEIMAN THE MAGNIFICENT, by Harold Lamb (Doubleday). Another of Mr. Lamb's "biographical narratives," a designation the author apparently employs to indicate that the books are neither straight bi-

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tory nor straight romance but a mélange of the two. Suleiman (1496-1566) was, of course, "the Grand Turk" whose conquests in the Near and Middle East rivalled Alexander of Macedon's, and whose armies penetrated Europe as far as the gates of Vienna. Mr. Lamb denies, however, that the famous siege of Vienna ever took place, that Suleiman was bent on the domination of Europe, and that his Moslem hosts were attacking Christianity as such, although the Europeans they came up against were of an entirely different opinion and fought some pretty brisk engagements on the strength of their belief. It was a great and stirring time, what with Martin Luther and his celebrated impudence; Don Juan and the Battle of Lepanto; the siege of St. Elmo; Barbarossa and his campaigns against the Knights of Malta; Ivan the Terrible; and the sweep of Tatar horsemen into the cities of Eastern Europe. Mr. Lamb writes about it all with his usual verve and out of a wide and scholarly knowledge of his subject. It is doubtful, though, whether even he knows just what young Suleiman said to the captivating Gulbehar as they lolled on a couch in the harem. That's where the "narrative" comes in.

STEP RIGHT UP!, by Dan Mannix (Harper). A sympathetic and funny account of life with a carnival by a young man who impulsively joined up with one, mastered the elements of fire-eating and sword-swallowing in record time, and then rose, Horatio Alger-like, into the rarefied company of neon-bulb swallowers, a coterie whose prestige is offset by a phenomenally high mortality rate. Mr. Mannix's reminiscences of his brief but eventful career (during which he also had a fling at being, successively, a human pincushion, a mentalist, and an escape artist) are interspersed with anecdotes about his associates and with revelations about their professional techniques. All this is tossed off in a rather helter-skelter fashion, but it's engrossing just the same.

THEODORE DREISER, by F. O. Matthiessen (Sloane). A new addition to the distinguished American Men of Letters series. While this book, which was completed shortly before the author's death last year, is both a biography and a critical study, its principal merit lies in its chronological account of Dreiser as a literary artist, including a discussion of whether he

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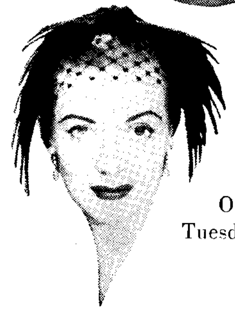
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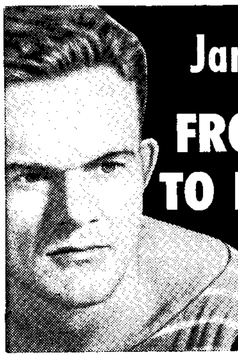
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really *was* one. Actually, Dreiser himself wrote more revealingly of his wretched early life and half-wretched middle and later years than Mr. Matthiessen does, and with much less reticence. And Mr. Matthiessen fails to make much sense out of Dreiser's political philosophy (which culminated in his joining the Communist Party at the age of seventy-four), probably because nobody could make much sense out of it. The major novels, from "Sister Carrie" to "An American Tragedy," are dealt with in chapter-long essays that are measured, objective, and acute. The general feeling one gets from this study is, to paraphrase a remark once made about another ungainly literary titan: "Alas, he was one of our great writers."

My Life with Dreiser, by Helen Dreiser (World). Mrs. Dreiser first encountered her future husband—she married him in 1944—one September day in 1919, when she interrupted his work on a book of essays called "Hey Rub-a-Dub-Dub!" to inform him that she was his distant cousin. This encounter was later described by Dreiser (referred to in this volume as Teddie) as comparable to that between "a little mincing gazelle and a tusked boar, wild and evil," and it resulted in a relatively unbroken twenty-six-year association, the details of which are set forth here in an equally feverish literary style. In its middle, or more trying, stages, the author found considerable consolation in yoga, which enabled her to regard Teddie's foibles with detachment as she presided over social functions at which were "many charming and vitally interesting people," none of whose names are omitted from the memoir. Illustrated with photographs and with facsimiles of personal letters, one of which is of an appropriately intimate nature.

•

To the Editor of the Journal:

The nation needs peace. The boys overseas are fighting and people at home are going out drinking every Saturday night and about every night.

But they should think about the boys overseas, go to church, and study about praying for the boys and for peace so all the boys could come home to their mothers and fathers.

When they come home, the first place you will see them will probably be in a beer joint.

Pilot Mountain, N. C.
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—*Winston-Salem Journal.*

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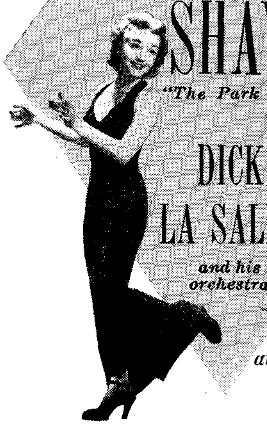
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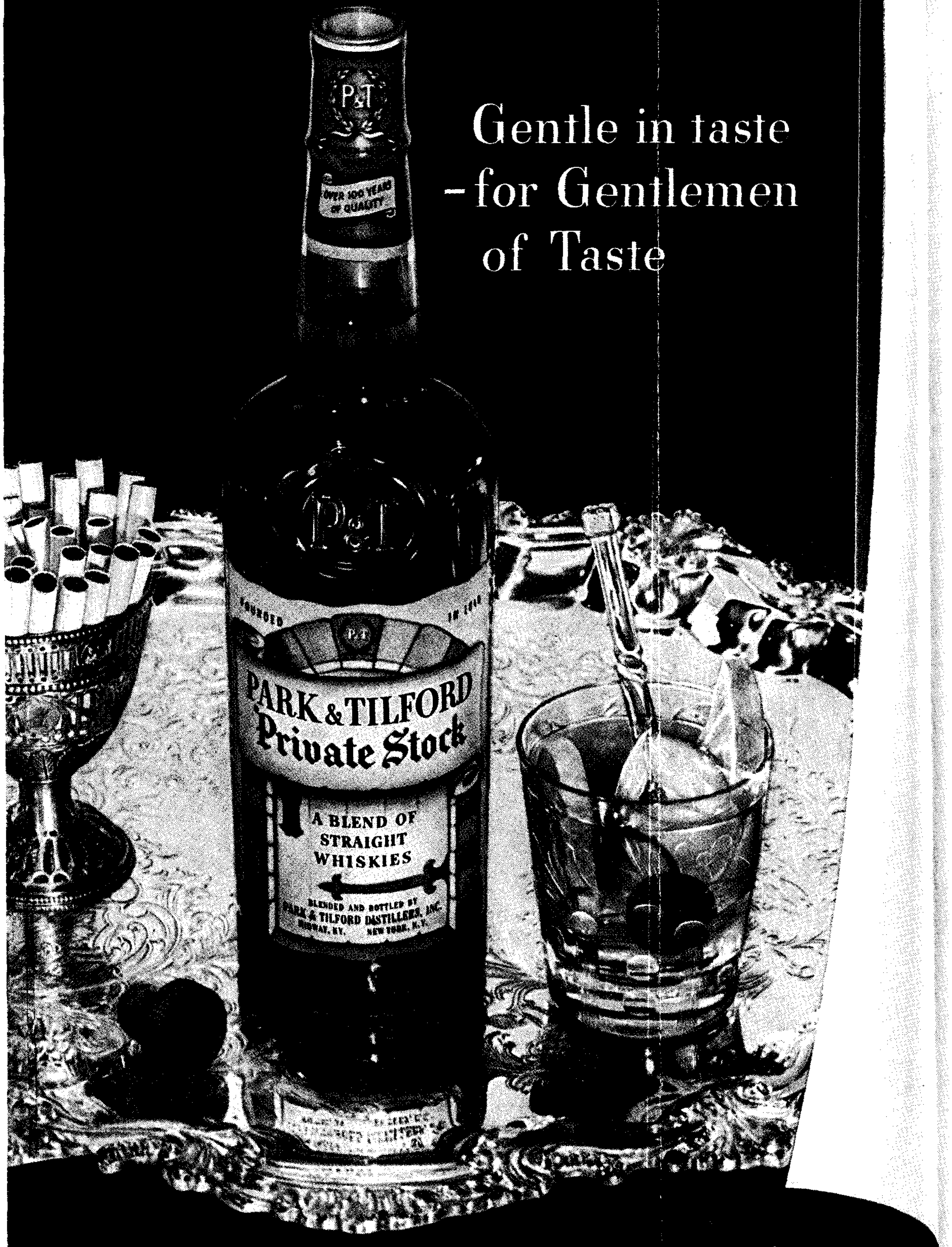
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